

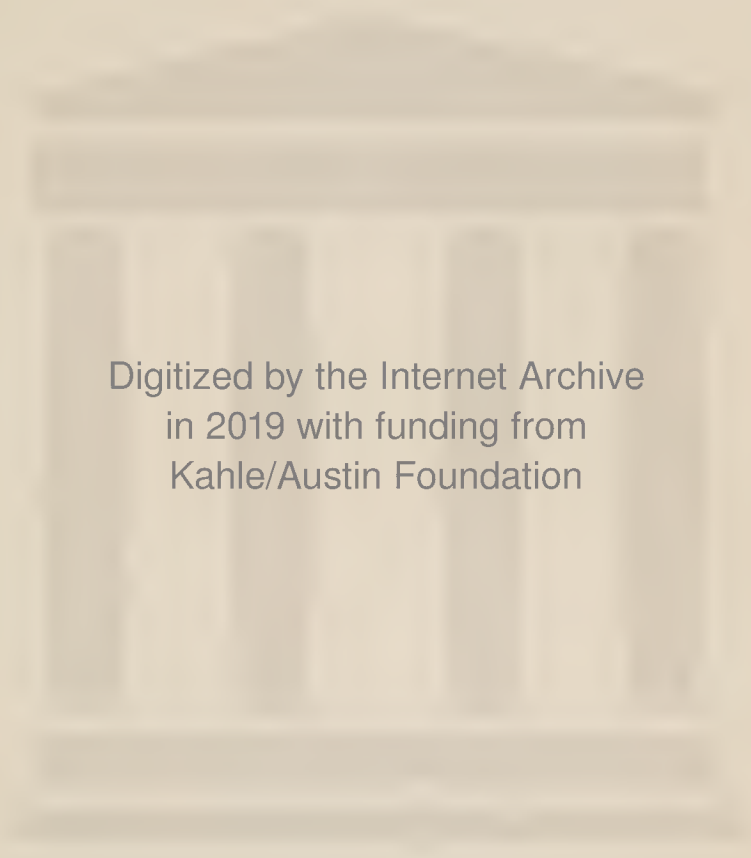


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The Little Admiral



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“He leaped towards the boat, gave it a shove into the water as he sprang in.”

*The Little -
- Admiral*

By JEAN N. M'ILWRAITH

*Hodder and Stoughton
Limited London*

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TO
MY NEPHEWS
WILLIS, TOM, ARCHIE AND JOHN

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Introduction

IT is historically true that the small son of an Admiral of the British Fleet was captured on the Isle aux Coudres in the manner described. He was held by the French till the taking of Quebec, but his adventures during those months are entirely fictitious.

The story has been written not so much for a prize as for a purpose, to wit, the instilling into young Canadians of British extraction more sympathy for their fellow-countrymen, the French, than is usually displayed.

Is not how it felt to lose Quebec as well worthy of delineation as how it felt to win it? In my early school days our study of Canadian history centred around the death of General Wolfe: "They run! They run!"

"Who run?" asked the dying hero.

“ The French, sir. They give way everywhere.”

The children of our day grew up believing the French to be a running race. The last war has changed all that, but youngsters of this generation might not be the worse for a passing glance at what the capture of Canada meant to Canadians earlier in the country than their own ancestors.

The French Canadians will be always with us, and if a strong nation is to be built up with their help, is not a better understanding of their point of view essential to our national development ?

“ **W**HY aren't we going on ? ” demanded George Hastings of his comrade, Teddy Rudell. The two boys, along with another midshipman, were enjoying their leisure perched on the lower part of the *Diana's* rigging. Teddy was too busy trying to fish with a trout line over the side of the ship to make any response.

“ I know why,” spoke up Harry Webb, the third boy. His face was thickly freckled up to the roots of his red hair, but his nose was not too tip-tilted to prevent its being poked into everything that was going on. “ We're waiting here for the slow-coaches to catch up.”

Teddy, being the admiral's son, could not allow this statement to pass. He was a slight slip of a boy with fair, curly hair and

blue eyes, one that ought still to have been at school in England, or tied to his mother's apron-string, instead of being abroad on a warship—but he would have allowed nobody to say so. That he was full of his own importance might be gathered from the tone in which he addressed his companions:—

“Nonsense! I heard my father say but now that he hoped soon to have a pilot.”

“A pilot!” exclaimed Harry, not to be outdone. “What need have we for a pilot in this tiresome St. Lawrence, where our whole fleet might sail abreast, a good space apart, too?”

“’Tis full of currents and sand-bars that shift about from year to year—so I’ve been told.”

“Have you also been told, Master Teddy,” asked George slyly, “why the French flag is hoisted upon this, your father’s ship? Have we changed our allegiance?”

Teddy looked aloft. Sure enough the *fleur-de-lis* was fluttering from the mizzen-gaff. The admiral’s son was but twelve years of age and this was his first voyage. He was

an ardent little Englishman, naturally filled with the glory of being a unit in the expedition destined to humble proud Quebec and transfer the whole of Canada from France to Britain, but some of the methods considered fair in war-time were displeasing to his tender conscience. His cheek grew red through his sunburn as he replied stoutly to his comrades :

“ That’s got nothing to do with a pilot. Come on ! Let’s have a game at battledore. Our watch will soon be on.”

But the other two midshipmen preferred to watch the game that was being played between the *Diana* and the south shore of the St. Lawrence, within a mile of which she was anchored. Neither of them was troubled with Teddy’s nice sense of honour, though both were older than he. George Hastings was almost full-grown, a handsome, brown-eyed boy of fourteen, somewhat over-conscious of his smart uniform.

“ Golly ! Look yonder ! ” he cried.

A small, two-masted schooner was coming cautiously out from Bic. On and on it danced over the shining, wavy water till

within gun-shot of the frigate. Then, apparently not satisfied with the stranger's appearance, it turned back towards the land. A smaller craft made a similar voyage of discovery, and retired like the first—so did a third and a fourth. At length, one more venturesome than its neighbours, a tiny sloop containing a man and a boy, sailed boldly out to the war vessel, and was hailed in French from her deck. Teddy was vain of the schooling that enabled him to translate to the other midshipmen all that passed between sloop and frigate.

“ The man from shore—that one in the odd red cap with a tassel on it—he's a pilot. He says he has sailed this great river, man and boy, for fifty years. He knows every rock and shoal and current as well as he knows the cabbage plants in his back garden, but he will show no English ship the way to Quebec.”

“ The rascal ! ” cried George. “ What says our officer to that ? ”

Teddy needed some urging to continue his interpretation.

“Go on! Go on!” Harry gave him a poke in the ribs.

“He asks why this was mistaken for an English ship when we are French from Cherbourg, laden with ammunition and stores for the garrison at Quebec.”

“The Canadian has his doubts of that!” laughed Harry, “despite the flag we are flying.”

“The money bag will smother his fears,” said George. “Look at the patches on his clothes. That boy along with him hasn’t had a good meal since last Christmas, I’ll wager.”

In truth the passage of some French coins down to the shallop, and the promise of more appeared to soothe the pilot’s suspicions. He scrambled aboard the frigate with an agility unlooked for in a man of his years.

“Ah! Ha!” cried Harry. “See him now!”

Teddy looked—and felt a lump rise in his throat. The old pilot was staring blankly at the British uniforms all about him. He shook his fist aloft at the *fleur-de-lis* which had deceived him, but already it was being hauled

down and the cross of England hoisted in its place. Then he ran to the side of the ship, made a trumpet with his hands and shouted vainly to the boy in his own boat, which had broken loose from the *Diana* so soon as he had left it. The gold of the enemy was now on its way to relieve his famishing family. Naught but Bigot's worthless paper money had been seen in the river parishes for many months. Wife and children would not inquire too closely into how these heaven-sent coins had been earned. So argued François, the fisherman-pilot, with himself, though he stormed mightily up and down the deck of the British man-of-war upon which he had been trapped. The sailors were raising the anchor and the vessel preparing to proceed on its conquering way—under his guidance.

“ ’Twould serve you right did I run you ashore upon Egg Island,” he said. “ I know of many a rock that has wrecked an English ship before. Our great river has been strewn with the debris—with barrels—with boxes—with bottles—with bedding—with sails and spars and masts—with *dead men* ! ”

But the jolly jack-o'-tars did not understand a word that the croaker said. One after another slapped him on the back, and when he had bitten off a chew of their tobacco, he began to feel at home. By the time his pipe was lit for him and drawing well, he was placidly directing the helmsman. Teddy overheard him remark :

“ The fortune of war ! ”

The expression pleased the admiral's son, who made up his young mind that long before they sighted Quebec he should have proved to this Canadian that his country would be far happier under British rule than ever it had been with the French. The senior officers of the *Diana* confined their conversation with François strictly to business, but the midshipmen hung upon his words and made him a hero. None so vain of the acquaintanceship as Teddy Rudell, who played the official translator. The old pilot was the first to call him “ The Little Admiral.” François was a great talker, and therefore vexed to be restricted by a foreign tongue. He was only too glad to converse with a

sympathetic schoolboy, fond of airing his French. By sundown he was ready to agree that a change of masters might not be a bad thing.

“ Jean Potvin, my neighbour, has sailed as far as the English colonies. He says they are rich and prosperous because the mother country has let them alone. She might leave us alone also, if we were hers. France does not so. We are drained of men and supplies of our very life-blood to keep this cruel war agoing—not for the good of Canada but for the glory of France. The military she has sent out to help us do but prey upon us. We have to do their bidding, no matter how hard it may be, and when the country is sucked dry, it will be thrown aside, like the skin of an orange.”

“ Why, then, not side with the English, or at least keep neutral ? ”

“ Ah, my little admiral, you know not the spirit of the Canadians. This is our country, won from the savages, from the wild beasts. We have held our ground through the long and bitter winters. We have cut down the

trees of the forest to make way for our little farms, to build our log cabins. It is for ourselves and our homes that we fight."

"But we English come not to take your homes from you."

"You are heretics. The curé bids us be loyal to France, the mother country."

"Even though she neglects you and allows her servants to abuse you?"

"Even so. It is not our place to judge her."

"You did so yourself but now."

"Babbling like thee, my babe. Off to thy cradle! 'Tis long past thy bedtime."

By June the 20th of that year, 1759, the English ships had sailed as far up the river as Isle Verte; the 22nd found them off Hare Island, and the following day they reached Isle aux Coudres. There the whole fleet anchored on June 24, in the famous harbour at the northern side of the island, where Jacques Cartier had found shelter more than two hundred years before. So said François the pilot, and many tales of that bold Breton navigator he told to Teddy Rudell, whose thirst for such was unbounded.

“ Are there any people on the Coudres ? ” asked the boy of the old man one evening, as the latter was leaning over the side of the *Diana*, smoking his pipe of peace. “ All the eight days we have lain here, not a soul have we seen stirring on land, though there are some few huts.”

“ The settlers are quite numerous, little admiral, and ’tis said they all spring from one couple that came here from the mainland, years and years ago.”

“ Are they now dead ? ”

“ No ! No ! Couriers from Quebec came down so soon as there was news of the English fleet being in the river, ordering all the habitants of the island to take refuge yonder upon the northern shore of the mainland. Our governor knew that your ships would be sure to cast anchor here, as all the French ships have done for centuries.”

“ Well, what of it ? We mean no harm to peaceful settlers. We have come solely to rescue them from the grinding tyranny of the French.”

François smiled genially.

“There is no such thing as a peaceful settler. Every one of us has to bear arms, as soon as he is large enough. The care of the crops is left to the women, children and aged people. All the men and boys are off with Montcalm. Ah, it is a fine island, this Coudres,” he continued, tactfully changing the subject. “There are upon it no wild animals, not a fox nor a lynx, not even a skunk nor a squirrel. The habitants are not affrighted by *loup-garous* nor *feux-follets*, as I tell you they are upon the Isle of Orleans, near to Quebec. The one fault of the Isle of Coudres is that it is overrun with rats.”

“Rats!”

“Yes, my little admiral, rats of a very large and ferocious breed that came on the ships from Normandy years ago. Now they have multiplied till they rule the island. They make themselves comfortable both winter and summer, have their town and their country houses, like ladies and gentlemen. Once a habitant tried to drive them off his farm, but they massed themselves under the

command of a very large rat, pure white in colour, and the man was chased off his own fields. He was thankful to leave the vermin in possession. The same white rat conquered another army of rats from the other side of the island, drove them all into the water at high tide. Ah! that was a great fight to see. The habitants hoped the two armies would extinguish one another, but Helas! The victors, under the white rat, became more numerous than ever."

These and similar tales fired the imagination of the three midshipmen with a strong desire to set foot upon the marvellous Isle aux Coudres.

"Ask your father, Teddy, if we mayn't land," said George Hastings. "He can't refuse you anything."

"Tell him George and I will go along to take care of you," said Harry Webb.

"I need no protection," replied Teddy in heat, "but I know my father will not let us land. He told me to seek no more favours from him after the way we conducted ourselves ashore at Louisbourg."

The other two lads laughed aloud at the recollection.

“That is now three weeks ago,” said George. “Sure he has forgot. We dreamt then that the Quebec we were to take was just round the corner from Halifax, but for more than a fortnight have we been sailing up this weary wide river with never a sight of it yet. It’s a shame, Hal, isn’t it, that we can’t stretch our legs on the first land that looks tempting?”

“What does the name mean, Teddy—*l’Ile aux Coudres*?” asked Harry.

“The Island of the Hazel Nuts.”

The admiral’s son longed for the land as ardently as did his comrades, but the reputation of his father’s fleet must not be put in jeopardy by any further escapades on his part.

“The Island of the Hazel Nuts,” repeated George in a regretful tone. “’Tisn’t the season for them, but there must be wild strawberries aplenty in those woods.”

“Poor little Teddy! He’s scared of the rats.”

“I fear no number of them, Hal. Are they not in scores aboard this ship? I am

as keen for the shore as yourselves. I wish we had not offended my father."

"Give him no chance to refuse—that's the only way," said George. "Let's go! See! There's a boat putting off to the island now. Make haste! The quartermaster can't put us out. Ho! for the land!"

The three leaped from their favourite perch in the rigging and ran to the ladder of ropes at the *Diana's* side. They were actually seated in the stern of the small boat before the man in charge could protest.

"The Captain told me 'twas not needful——" he began, but George cut him short:

"We desire to be landed on the Coudres."

The sailors dipped their oars with their accustomed precision. The boys were off!

THE few moments granted him for reflection between ship and island made the small Teddy a trifle uneasy in his conscience. He was not directly disobeying orders, since neither father nor captain had given explicit instructions that no midshipman was to land. He had merely been told to ask no favours. Well, he had asked none. The superior officers of the King's Navy must be made to understand that their juniors had some rights as Englishmen, and were at liberty to spend their leisure as they chose.

The tide was going out, so that the small boat could not be brought to the edge of the strand. The sailors rowed in as near as possible, and then, under the direction of François, an iron support was put out upon

either side to keep her from tipping over when she should be left high and dry. Three of the seamen took the midshipmen on their backs, as it was not fitting that young gentlemen of the frigate should wet their feet or soil their silk stockings and shoe-buckles, wading across the mud-flats to the shore.

For half an hour after they landed, the boys were content to roam about on the beach, firing an occasional stone at some long-legged young herons they saw flying awkwardly about.

“François says the folk of this island are called ‘quack-eaters,’” Teddy remarked. “These must be the very birds.”

“Could we take some of them back with us to the admiral’s table, he might excuse our excursion, if they proved tender fowl.”

“I would we had a gun.”

“Bah! I can knock one over with a stick,” said George.

He ran off in pursuit of the “quack,” and his comrades ran too—around a projecting point of land, quite out of sight of the sailors. Breathless and heated, at length they flung

themselves down upon the grass at the edge of the woods to rest. Wild strawberries there certainly were upon every sunny bank, and the boys feasted themselves as only boys can who have not tasted fresh fruit since a preceding summer. On and on they strayed towards the southern end of the island.

“ We have come a good way from the boat,” said George suddenly.

“ ’Twill take a long time to fill the water-casks,” Hal carelessly replied. “ The stream was small.”

“ Hark! what’s that? ” Teddy gave a shrill shriek of alarm.

There was a crashing noise in the undergrowth. Presently the brown nose of a large beast made its appearance, held close to the ground. Had it smelt the young middies? Was it crouching for a spring? What nonsense the old pilot had told about there being no wild animals on the island—here was a monster! His whole neck became visible. Hal shouted in glee:

“ ‘ A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse! ’ ”

The animal, which had been peaceably munching grass, raised its head, startled at the sound. It might have retreated into the thick underbrush, had there not been a neighbour close upon its heels. One by one there emerged from the woods no less than half a dozen stray steeds. They came trotting towards the boys in friendly fashion, as if pleased to see human faces again.

“Golly! We’ll have a ride,” cried George. The other two were just as eager. This would indeed be an adventure worth relating when they returned aboard ship. But it was no easy task to mount the horses. Amiable though they were in appearance, they had no mind to go back into harness, and to be ridden bare-back was a liberty not to be tolerated, if it could possibly be avoided. Finding it was not to be avoided since they were chased back into the woods and captured there, three stout Canadian ponies submitted to a midshipman apiece. Off they started upon a jolly canter along the shore, where the receding tide had left a generous margin of hardened sand.

After the heavy odours of ship-board, it was delightful indeed to breathe the fresh air of that fair green isle, to inhale the perfume of wild-flowers wafted from the adjoining woods, and above all to feel between one's knees the sides of a lively horse bearing one onwards to explore. The midshipmen whistled and sang and the occasional sight of a deserted home, of the unploughed fields of the banished islanders distressed them not a whit. The trio belonged to the all-conquering Anglo-Saxon race; it was a matter of course that the weaker must go to the wall.

They galloped on, past more cleared fields and woodlands, past crosses for wayside worshippers, and even a primitive church, past the remains of signal fires which had till recently borne tidings of the weal or woe of the habitants to their neighbours across the water. Had not François told the boys that a high, bright flame kept steadily burning signified that all was well? A smouldering, flickering fire meant sickness; a bright blaze suddenly extinguished, death, and

so on—small fires for children, large ones for adults. Each habitant knew well the position of his far-off neighbour's house, and it was an anxious matter to discover who had good fortune and who bad, especially during the long months of winter when the north and south shores of the great river were divided by impassible ice-floes. The latest message of the signal fires had been that the British were coming up from the Gulf—and now they were here!

The midshipmen came at length to a lonely little farm, just a few fields enclosed by a cedar fence, and a vegetable garden, wherein potatoes, Indian corn, tobacco and onions had been planted with a view to keeping comfort in the tiny cabin. It was white-washed and seemed clean enough to be an agreeable resting place to boys who had been long at sea and were now fatigued with the unusual exercise of horseback riding.

“Let's see if there be not a well upon this place,” said Harry. “I am main thirsty.”

The other two were glad of an excuse to dismount also.

“There must have been children here,” said Teddy. Upon the end of the stick he carried he held up a baby’s shoe. It was home-made, and so was the furniture of the small room which they invaded with ease. Long strips of *catalonge* lay upon the floor, and the walls were adorned with some cheap prints of saints and miracles.

“Miserable little hole!” said George, whose people lived in a castle in England. Teddy felt a rush of tears to his eyes.

“They must have been mighty sorry to leave it nevertheless,” said he, “and they have gone in great haste.”

Truly it appeared so. The yarn was still in the spinning-wheel; a few unwashed earthen dishes and half a loaf of dark-coloured bread lay upon the rude table.

A sudden noise from one of the small rooms at the back made the three young intruders stand stock still to listen. Teddy hung back—not from fear, but he felt they had already gone far enough into a house that did not belong to them. The older boys boldly opened the intervening door and peeped past it.

“Rats!” shouted Hal, in a tone of relief. Sure enough, the vermin were running riot in the back part of the house.

“’Tis a marvel they left the bread untouched,” said Teddy.

“They had other fare,” said George in an awestruck voice. White as a sheet he came from an outhouse at the rear. “Don’t go in there!”

He tried to push Teddy away, but the small boy was already at the doorway, gazing horror-struck at an object that lay upon the floor. It was the body of an old man, a very old man, judging by the blood-stained white hair that straggled over his scalp.

Teddy turned to flee from the spot, but Hal held him fast.

“Don’t you see the gold?” he muttered.

Following the direction of his friend’s pointed finger, the boy saw a large quantity of glittering *louis d’or* spilled upon the floor. The rats had bitten a brave hole in the canvas bag which contained it.

“Never mind, let us away,” said the

shuddering Teddy. He had nerves, but Harry Webb was already kneeling in a vain endeavour to loosen the grip of the dead man's fingers upon the mouth of the bag.

"Try no more, here's my hat," said George, whose first shock had been quite overcome by the sight of the treasure. His allowance had ever proved too small for his expensive tastes.

"Golly! What a time we can have in Quebec with all that gold. The other middies will be eating their eyes out with envy and wishing they had come ashore with us. Here, Teddy," he continued, coming out to where the boy was sitting, white and still in the little garden, "we'll divide the treasure trove into three."

"I'll have none of it," replied the admiral's son, with a shiver.

"Don't be a donkey. The gold is doing no good to anybody here. Perchance we may find the old man's heir."

"Aboard an English man-of-war? That's likely."

"At least we ought not to leave the money here to help the enemy."

“My father will know best what to do with it, if you take it aboard.”

“You will tell him? That’s a handsome way to treat your chums. Do as you will with your own share. Hal and I mean to hang on to ours.”

“Please yourselves,” said the smallest boy manfully, “but I shall assuredly tell my father of our find.”

“You mean little toad!” stormed George. “The gold is ours without a doubt. We never thought you a tale-bearer, Teddy Rudell. Come, perhaps you will condescend to carry a third aboard, as the whole is somewhat heavy for one.”

“Let us get it quickly away from this place, then.”

Teddy refused to enter the house again, but George and Harry brought all of the coins out on the beach. There the lads seated themselves upon some low boulders and divided the treasure into three parts. It took some time, but at last they had it all concealed about their persons. George secreted his portion in the lining of his

three-cornered hat ; Hal loaded his pockets, his waistcoat and even his stockings, while Teddy carried his share tied up in a stout silk handkerchief, ready to hand over to his father when he went aboard.

The horses, meanwhile, had been working havoc in the vegetable garden. They made objections, as before, to being mounted, but were captured at last and the midshipmen rode onwards. But the zest was gone from the expedition. Riding seemed no longer a delightful sport, but a means of getting somewhere—anywhere—away from the dreadful sight they had seen in that back shed. The sun had gone behind a cloud, leaving the air too cool to be pleasant. The very birds seemed to have stopped singing, and the silence was broken only by the sound of the horses' hoof beats upon the hard sand. George tried to whistle back his courage, but could not stick to a tune ; while Harry forced himself to comment upon the grand excursion they were making.

“ Let's ride all round the island,” said

he. "'Twill be quicker than going back as we came.

To this the others eagerly consented. None of them cared to pass the little cabin again. It may have been the captured gold that weighed upon their spirits, but surely this ride was proving much longer than they imagined it would be. Perhaps the island was more than six miles long as François had said. Each point they rounded would, they hoped, bring them in view of the fleet riding at anchor, but no such welcome sight greeted their anxious eyes. The horses trotted briskly as before, but a sense of foreboding descended upon their young riders—foreboding about to be fulfilled!

Without a second's warning, a blaze of musketry came from behind a projecting clump of rocks and bushes. The three horses staggered and fell to the ground. The young riders leaped, unhurt, from their backs. Three men, in the homespun garb of the habitant, ran out of their ambush.

George and Hal made a dash to escape, but they were no match for the fleet-footed Cana-

dian rangers. They were instantly caught and brought back to the spot where Teddy stood, staring stupidly at the dying horses. He and George had both lost their hats in the compulsory dismounting. Teddy's hair ribbon had gone too, and now with the breeze off the water ruffling his waving, yellow locks, he looked like a mother's darling, strangely out of harmony with his grim surroundings. Mechanically lifting the hat nearest him, he put it on his head, not remarking at the time how much heavier than his own it was.

The boy was fond of horses and the prostrate form of the one which had been bearing him forward so gallantly but a few minutes before brought a lump to his throat. Looking up, he met the glance of one of the captors, the tallest of the three, who was burned dark as an Indian and had somewhat of the same erect agility in form and keenness of vision. Teddy thought him well-named when he heard the other two, returning with Harry and George, hail him as *La Bécasse*. This Woodcock appeared to share

in Teddy's feeling for the horses. He was too much concerned over the fall of the one which young Rudell had been riding to care whether the young captives made their escape or not. He knelt down upon the sand beside it and examined the wound which his own bullet had made, to convince himself that the poor brute was really breathing its last. As he rose to his feet, he remarked the regret painted upon the face of the smallest boy, and a cobweb of kindness was spun between Canadian and midshipman from that moment.

George meanwhile was trying to elude his captor long enough to recover the hat which lay almost within his reach, but the men hurried him and his companions off into the woods. There a fourth man was sitting quietly upon a fallen tree, as if waiting to learn the result of the scrimmage. He wore a shabby soutane and a battered, clerical hat, but there was much dignity both in his bearing and in the tone with which he addressed the others, in French, of a better quality than theirs :

“ Ah, my friends, these are but children, scarcely worth the wasting of so much good powder and shot.”

“ And the killing of three good horses,” growled *La Bécasse*. “ Little I dreamt that one of them would prove to be my own.”

“ Are you certain, Antoine, that these are not stragglers from a larger party ? ”

“ There was no one else in sight, my father.”

“ Then let us proceed upon our search for Père Grison.”

“ What shall we do with these prisoners ? ” asked the man they called Pierre.

“ One of you can stay here to guard them, till we come back. The Woodcock goes with me,” said the priest.

“ One man will not be enough,” objected Antoine. “ They are lively youngsters.”

“ Were it not better, my father,” asked Pierre, “ for you to wait with these little Englishmen—you and *La Bécasse*, since he is the best shot. Antoine and I will go to seek Père Grison.”

“ And his gold,” added he who was named the Woodcock.

“No,” replied the priest firmly. “I shall go with you, Pierre and Antoine, to find the old miser. I shall see to it that he pays you well for his rescue, if he be alive. If dead, I shall give him Christian burial. His gold, if we find it, must be carefully saved for the little hunchback, his granddaughter, who is in great need.”

ANTOINE and Pierre were short, thick-set, evil-looking men. The former was deeply pitted with small-pox; the latter had a scar across the upper part of his cheek, from a bayonet-thrust or a bullet, that had also displaced his right eye. It roamed aimlessly skyward, while the left was bent fiercely upon earthly affairs. Both men had suffered much at the hands of fortune in this starving colony, where they were forced to fight for a cause they would willingly desert. Now their hands were turned against every man. If they could but secure the miser's gold, they thought, it would be a simple matter to murder the unarmed priest and to make their escape to the British fleet, anchored off the Isle aux Coudres. They would be welcomed as pilots, without a doubt, or better still, they

could give information about these three young captives, who were no common sailors, as one could judge by their uniforms. Even *La Bécasse*, the champion fighter, would be unable to hold the boys should a whole boat load of English sailors come to their rescue.

As Pierre and Antoine followed the curé into the open, they looked back at the Woodcock and scowled in no friendly fashion. He had seated himself upon the log where the priest had been. His musket was lying idly across his knees. The three midshipmen lay close together on the grass in front of him.

“If we were to start up,” whispered George, “and each run a different way, that one man could not chase us all.”

“But it would go hard with the one he caught,” replied Harry Webb, “and that would be myself. I’ve always lost in the foot races with you two. We had best keep together and near Teddy. He can tell us what is being said.”

“Where have those two gone with the priest, Ted?”

“To look for the miser and his gold.”

“Gold? To think I’d forgot mine! It’s in my hat.” George slapped his bare poll. “Tell this guard of ours that I must have my hat, Teddy. My head is cold.”

“I meant not to reveal the fact that I understand French. They talk more freely before us, thinking we know naught but English.”

“Pshaw! You can’t keep that up. You will have to berate them right roundly in their own tongue before we are through with this affair.”

Thus urged, Teddy lifted up his voice and spoke softly to the big Canadian: “*Bon jour, Monsieur!*”

The Woodcock started, straightened his back and grasped his gun. He could not have been more astonished if one of the chattering chipmunks in the trees above had suddenly broken out into human speech. When he saw Teddy smiling, he laughed at his own concern.

“What would you, little one?”

Teddy translated George’s message, whereat the Woodcock laughed once more.

“ He is like to have worse than a cold in his head ere he sees his mamma again.”

“ Tell him,” said George, when this answer had been interpreted to him, “ that all my money is in my hat, and that I cannot pay for my ransom until I get it.”

“ That is different,” replied the Woodcock. “ When the others return I shall go with him to look for it.”

“ Why wait ? ” continued Teddy. “ We like not the looks of those other men. They would but rob us. If you will take this gentleman to find his hat, the other one and I will not stir from this spot till you come back. You will not have far to go. It was just out on the beach there that we were upset. The hat must be lying beside the dead horses.”

“ You promise to stay here ? Well, I feel like trusting your face, my little man, but can you answer for him of the red hair ? ”

“ Certainly ! ” replied Teddy proudly. The officers of His Majesty’s Navy never break their word.”

La Bécasse smiled at the boy’s important

air, but he rose, and led George from the woods towards the shore. No sooner were they out of sight and hearing than Hal exclaimed :

“ By Jupiter, Teddy ! You have George’s hat on yourself. I’ve been thinking how small your face looked in it.”

Teddy took off the hat in question. He felt then, as he had not before, how very heavy it was. The gold stored within the band had made it a better fit for his head.

“ Let’s run after them,” said Harry.

“ No ; we can’t. We promised to stay here.”

“ Shout, then ! ”

Shout they did at intervals, but without effect. Half an hour passed. George and his guard were surely very, very long in returning. So thought two weary boys on the log. Was it possible that they had been captured by the sailors of the fleet ? An hour and more elapsed. If there were no wild animals upon the Coudres, it abounded in insects, the pair discovered—insects with

appetites as ravenous as their own were growing to be.

“ Ah! There is some one at last,” said Hal. “ Hear voices, Ted? ”

The approaching footsteps proved to be not those of the Woodcock and his captive. It was the priest and the two men who had gone with him that crashed their way through the undergrowth to the fallen log. Pierre and Antoine looked sour with disappointment, but the curé was calm as before.

“ I am satisfied to have given the old man Christian burial,” Teddy heard him remark.

“ Where is *La Bécasse*, that we find here but two of the prisoners—and alone? ” said Antoine.

“ He knows where the gold is and has gone to secure it,” growled Pierre.

“ ’Twere well if he did so,” said the priest. “ He is the natural guardian of the heiress, having befriended her since her helpless infancy.”

The other two Canadians seemed by no means pleased at the suggestion. Their mutterings were both loud and deep when the

Woodcock at last appeared, alone and empty-handed. He was limping too, and apparently much chagrined.

“Where is the third boy?” asked the priest.

“He persuaded me to take him to look for his hat, wherein he assured me was gold enough to ransom his comrades and himself——”

“The miser’s gold!” shrieked Antoine and Pierre in a breath.

“No! No! When we found the hat, there was not a coin in it. ’Twas all a trick to get away.

“‘You lie, cub of an Englishman!’ said I. At that the rascal lifted a stone and struck me here on the ankle. Then he took to his heels and ran like a hare round the next point——”

“After the gold, no doubt, where he had hidden it.”

“After the sailors of his ship, Antoine. I followed him hard and did not drop the pursuit till we could hear the sound of their voices, shouting along the shore, looking for

these lads. Had it not been for his laming of me I could easily have caught him before they heard his cries, for he was breathless with running. I saw him actually in the midst of his countrymen before I gave up the chase. I came back here by a short-cut through the woods, to give you warning. We must hasten away from this island. The English will rake it from end to end looking for these lads, but they will go round by the beach. No fear of them trusting themselves in the woods. We have yet time to escape."

Teddy listened to this tale with all his ears. George must be freed from the charge of falsehood. He was on the point of delivering up his friend's hat to the priest when Harry kicked him gently.

"Look at those two," he whispered, directing Teddy's attention to the lowering looks of Pierre and Antoine. Apparently they distrusted the Woodcock's story. Unaware that the smallest of their prisoners could understand them they spoke apart and near him, while the priest was examining the wounded ankle of *La Bécasse*.

“These young fellows have stolen the miser’s gold and have hidden it, that is certain,” grumbled Pierre.

“The biggest of them showed *La Bécasse* where it is. That is why he let him go. Now he waits to guard it until we can be got rid of. Then the Woodcock and the prisoners will share the spoil.”

That was Antoine’s verdict, but the priest had come to a different decision.

“Undoubtedly the lad who escaped,” said he, “has set the English sailors searching the island for these children. We must wait no longer here, now that we have done our last duty to the dead.”

“But his gold, my father? Surely you would not have us leave without that. It would be an easy matter for us to hide in the woods with prisoners so small. No stupid crew of an English warship would ever be able to find us.”

“The recovery of the gold can wait, Antoine, till a more convenient season. The rats will not eat it.”

“But the enemy may discover it.”

“ If *La Bécasse* has not already done so,” said Pierre.

The Woodcock turned a wrathful glance upon the speaker. He might have followed it with a blow had not the priest intervened :

“ Let us go ! We do but waste precious time with idle words.”

He offered his shoulder for the big Canadian to lean upon, but the latter declared he needed no help and that his ankle would be well directly. Nevertheless as he lagged behind the others, he seemed both pleased and amused with the words of sympathy little Teddy gave him, when he had opportunity, both upon the loss of his horse and the hurt to his foot. He even allowed the boy to bind up the ankle with his neck-cloth.

“ ’Tis but a bruise,” said he. “ To-morrow I’ll be walking as well as my neighbours.”

It would have been easier to proceed along the edge of the beach, but the fear of pursuit, by land or by water, kept the party under cover of the woods, where the undergrowth made walking difficult. It was nearly an hour before they reached a point on the

western end of the island where a sail boat was moored with heavy stones, close to a huge boulder which almost concealed her. Into this craft the priest embarked with Pierre and Antoine, taking Harry with them. *La Bécasse* went in among the bushes on the bank and lifted out a light bark canoe, saying :

“ The little boy shall go in this with me.”

“ That he shall not !” cried Antoine.

“ Both prisoners belong to us.”

“ I saw them first, and 'twas I who shot my own poor horse under this chap,” retorted the other.

“ Undoubtedly the child belongs to the Woodcock,” said the priest, whose word was law. “ It will be another mouth for him to feed, that's all.”

But the faces of the two men who were hoisting the sail grew black as thunder. Harry watched them with frightened eyes. It was some minutes before he realized that he and Teddy were to be separated. Then a panic of fear overtook him. It was terrible to think of being left alone with strangers of whose language he understood not one

word, strangers too whose looks indicated violent tempers roused by the loss of the miser's gold. They might murder him for the portion he had in his clothing, or torture him to discover what had become of the rest. Hal found no comfort in the presence of the priest whose garb was foreign, as well as his tongue. He seemed impossible as a friend. Eagerly watching the canoe in which Teddy was embarked with *La Bécasse*, he saw that, instead of heading up the river, as the sail-boat was doing, it was cutting across to the mainland of the north shore. Harry gave a loud cry :

“ Wait, Teddy ! Wait for me ! ” He sprang into the water.

The sail boat had a fine breeze behind her, and the tide was also in her favour, running up stream. The grumbling men agreed that the Woodcock might have both prisoners to feed, if he wanted them. The current ran very swiftly between island and mainland. It was doubtful if they could put about, and there was always the risk of capture by the English. So, despite the curé's objections,

they continued on their way westward. The good father, seeing that the boy was swimming manfully, said to himself that he would be far safer with *La Bécasse* than with Pierre and Antoine. Let him go.

Harry was indeed a good swimmer, but he was not used to currents such as that of the St. Lawrence. He seemed to be drawing steadily further away from, instead of nearer to, the canoe in which Teddy was. The Woodcock paddled hard in his direction, but before he came up to him, the boy's head had disappeared. Teddy was distracted.

"Oh, paddle, M'sieu!" he cried. "Harry is far too strong a swimmer to be drowned."

By the time they reached the spot where he was last seen, Teddy had thrown off his hat and jacket, kicked off his shoes, and before the Canadian realized what he was about to do he had dived after his companion.

"Peste!" said *La Bécasse*. "The English are all mad."

The undercurrent drew Teddy exactly to the spot where it had drawn Harry. He came to the surface in a minute or two, tug-

ging his chum, but the canoe was far away, or seemed so to the overladen youngster. When at last it came alongside, the best the Woodcock could do was to tow the lads ashore. An attempt to take them into it would have surely upset the tiny boat. The difficult landing was made at last. Teddy was too much exhausted either to speak or to move, but the Woodcock saw that he was at least alive. About Harry he was not so sure. He began rubbing the older boy to see if he could bring him back to life. As he held him up by the heels to let the water run out of his mouth, *louis d'or* began to drop from Harry's clothing. The big Canadian piously crossed himself.

“The gold of Père Grison! That is what has killed him—not our great river.”

He stripped the half-drowned boy and took from him all the fatal money, which he placed in a heap in the bottom of his canoe. Then he continued the rubbing, but still Harry gave no sign of a return to life.

Suddenly the Woodcock's quick ear caught a sound that came from the other side of the

next projecting headland. It was the regular dip of oars—trained sailors—a search party from the frigate! Well, they were welcome to this water-logged midshipman, but he would keep hold of the other. Perhaps he too was loaded up with gold which did not belong to him.

Quick as a flash, *La Bécasse* shouldered his canoe and carried it into the underbrush, where without tipping a coin out of it, he concealed it completely. Lifting the limp Teddy in his arms he bore him there also, stepping backwards as he did so, in order that his footprints might indicate to the pursuers that the walker had returned from the woods, if it should be noticed that he had gone into them. With his clothing thrown hastily across his body, Harry was left upon the beach to be discovered by his countrymen, should they see fit to stop at this place.

THE English sailors did see fit to stop. François, the pilot, was with them, and he called their attention to the body lying on the sand. The incoming tide enabled them to draw up close to it on the beach. Teddy could hear every word that was said, though he was too weak to cry out, even if the Woodcock had not put a hand over his mouth.

“Poor Harry! Poor Harry!”

That was the voice of George Hastings. So he, at least, was safe.

“The rogues have murdered him for the gold.”

“No, sir, this lad’s drowned. There are no marks of violence on him.”

“They’ve thrown him overboard, after they’ve stripped and robbed him.”

“ Then how came his clothing here ? ”

“ I would we could understand what François thinks about it.”

“ He would have us look at the footprints on the sand.”

The sailors surrounded the old pilot, who indicated by signs that the Canadian, for he could make out the steps of one man only, had landed here, probably to put the boy ashore, where he would be found by his friends and had then re-embarked, since the later footprints undoubtedly pointed towards the river. The marks of the boat's keel on the sand must have been obliterated by the rising tide.

“ These footprints are still fresh ! ” cried George. “ Haste ye, lads ! We may catch sight of the villains round the next headland. 'Twill be a marvel truly if seamen of the King's Navy cannot make up with two or three Canadian knaves in a boat.”

“ But they may have a sail ! ”

“ If so, we shall see it and drop pursuit, since they know the river better than we. Lift Midshipman Webb into the boat, men,

and give him a dram. I doubt not but some of you have whisky handy. We shall bring him to life, never fear! Harry Webb isn't so easily put out of mischief. I've seen him look worse than that after too long a swim."

Teddy breathed a sigh of relief at the last words. He could cheerfully endure whatever the fortune of war might have in store for himself were he but assured that both of his late companions were alive and well. From between half-closed eyelids, he watched his countrymen re-embark as idly as if he had no concern whatever with them. The voice of the Woodcock roused him at last.

"I wonder at myself for keeping hold of thee, little one, but thou art all I have to show for our expedition. I should be called to account by Pierre and Antoine, did I let all of our prisoners go."

"My father, Admiral Rudell——" began Teddy weakly.

"Save your breath, little man. We are quite secure for this time—at least I am. Wert thou indeed an admiral's son——"

Teddy's offended dignity braced his speech.

"We shall not get along very well together, my good man, if you begin by doubting my word."

The Woodcock took off his cap and made a mock obeisance.

"Without doubt you are a prisoner of value. You must pardon me if I employ every means in my power to prevent your escape. Had you been as one of my own worthless urchins you would even now be off in that boat with your sailors—but an admiral's son—No! No!—I must keep hold of you."

"The fortune of war!" said Teddy bravely, though his lip quivered. His teeth were chattering with cold. Would he ever again see the cosy, warm mess-room of the *Diana*?

"Come," said *La Bécasse*, "let me take off your shirt to wring it dry. What is this hard and heavy bag you have tied round your waist? I marvel it did not sink you."

"It did. I was the best swimmer at our school in England, but with the gold I carried and that upon Harry too, I thought verily

I should never get him to the top of the water."

"Gold? Where got you that?"

While the Canadian was rubbing him to a reviving warmth, Teddy told the full story of the finding of Father Grison's gold and what had become of it.

"Then the whole is now with yourself!" exclaimed the Woodcock.

"No. Harry's share——"

"Is in my canoe. You must take care of it all. Not a single piece will I carry. It bears a curse, for it was won through cheating the poor. While laden with it, the three of you were captured. Happy the lad who rid himself of his portion and thus escaped. It drowned the other one, and almost thysself too."

"Harry is not drowned!"

"Perhaps not. Sailors are used to these *contretemps*. They may bring him to life in the boat."

The Woodcock wished to be consoling, but he feared that Hal was dead indeed. To beguile the thoughts of his forlorn little

prisoner from his absent comrades, he told him the story of Father Grison's fortune, and how he had made it by grinding down the other habitants of the island. They would eat their corn and have none, but he would hoard his and then sell it at famine prices. So he had grown richer and richer every year, but he kept on living in his miserable hovel in the woods, just behind the house of *La Bécasse*, where he had been found.

“ He must have gone there to discover what had become of all the people, for no one would think of him in the hurry of leaving. Parents were even separated from their children. Père Grison's little hunch-backed granddaughter was one of the first to be taken to a place of safety on the mainland. Marcelline is loved of all. She might have had a good home with us, or with any of the neighbours, but she thought it her duty to wait upon her old *grandpère*, though he would hardly grant her food or clothing. It was she who begged me to return to the island to seek for him. The curé of St. Joachim, who was visiting the parish over there, crossed with me in the

canoe, lest I should have trouble to induce the old man to leave the island. Marcelline will now be rich. She can live at ease the rest of her life."

"She is with your family, you say? Then you will take all the gold to her, monsieur."

"Not me. I dare not touch it. Had the priest been still with us he might have run the risk, but not the father of twelve."

"Pierre and Antoine had no such fear. They would gladly have taken the gold for themselves."

"They are not of the Isle aux Coudres. They live at St. Joachim. Perhaps they know not of the curse upon the money."

"How came they to the island at all?"

"They belonged to a large party sent down from Quebec to oppose a British landing on the Coudres. They alone had the courage to come ashore when your fleet was seen to be actually here."

"Why did not the priest return with you?"

"There is room for but one, besides myself, in my canoe, and moreover, he thought it unwise to lose the chance of returning to his

own parish with Pierre and Antoine. Knowing their character, he had also decided to keep watch over their prisoner."

"Poor Harry!"

"Tut! Tut! Little one. You at least are safe—with me. I will take you to Quebec. There you will see our great Cathedral, our College of the Jesuits and many other fine buildings. When you mark the strong citadel we have there, you will laugh at your people who think to capture it. Our famous general, the Marquis de Montcalm, has an army encamped all the way from Beauport, near the town, to Montmorenci. An enemy will have to pass that before he can get within reach of the city. Thousands of our country people toil day and night throwing up banks of earth to protect the soldiers. Ah, my young sir, your general—what is his name?"

"Wolfe—General Wolfe. He has been victorious at Louisbourg."

"But Quebec is different. It is the capital, the keystone of the colony. When your hungry wolf comes up there to swallow us all, he will but snap his jaws together and hurt

his own teeth—but I will take care of thee, little admiral, never fear.”

“ You are very good, but it is more likely that I shall be the one to extend my protection to yourself and your family.”

La Bécasse put his hand to his mouth and coughed to hide a smile. The half-clad, shivering little boy on the beach that cool June evening did not strike him as likely to be a powerful protector. Teddy's hair was long, and the wetting had taken all the curl out of it, so that it straggled all about his face in strings, till the Woodcock rubbed it dry and tied it in place with the string that was round the kerchief full of gold.

“ Haply your coat was not wetted, sir, so that you can now put it on, but first of all we must arrange this treasure about you in the way you can carry it most conveniently.”

The *louis d'or* from George's hat, from Harry's clothes, and from Teddy's bag being all brought together, *La Bécasse* exclaimed at the number of them.

“ 'Tis a heavy load for so small a child to bear, not to speak of the curse.”

“ I am very strong,” said Teddy, his small nose uplifted.

“ Bien ! I think I can divide the burden somewhat.”

Taking off the long scarf of different colours which he wore around his waist, the Woodcock deftly inserted the money, coin by coin, into the meshes of it. The task took a long time, even with Teddy’s help, but when at last it was done, the portion containing the gold completely encircled the boy’s body.

“ ’Twill be warmer for thee than thy wet waistcoat,” said *La Bécasse*. He brought the ends of the scarf over the boy’s shoulders and crossed them on his chest to tie behind, thus making the bandage of coin as secure as it could possibly be.

“ I am ready to go with you now,” said Teddy, but not yet did the Canadian deem it safe to set out for the mainland in his canoe. He had not seen the *Diana’s* boat return which had gone in pursuit of the shallop. It might touch at the island again at the place where Harry had been found, to make further investigations, though François would

be loyal enough to his own countrymen to lead no search parties inland.

There would doubtless be other boats and other bands of seamen out looking for the lost lads ; so the Woodcock withdrew with his young prisoner further and further into the woods, till they reached nearly the centre of the island, walking slowly on account of Teddy's weak state and his own bruised ankle. The boy had kept up stoutly while actually in sight of the river where his father's fleet lay, but hidden in that thick wood, fear and loneliness came upon him that gathered strength with the lowering darkness. The June daylight lasted long in the open, but here a heavy curtain of leaves shut it out. The Woodcock sat down at last upon the trunk of a birch that in falling had cleared a skylight. He drew from his pocket part of a loaf of black bread, and breaking off a piece offered it to Teddy.

“ No, thank you. I am not hungry.”

The bread recalled what he had seen in the rat-haunted cabin. Not for worlds could he have tasted a bite.

“ Bien ! ” said the Canadian, and munched it himself. “ We shall lie here to rest for an hour or two.”

So saying, he stretched himself out to his full length, which was considerable. The ready sleep of the hunter came at his call, but Teddy could not close his eyes. What a fool he had been not to rouse himself and to struggle desperately for freedom when it had been within his reach down on the beach yonder. The sailors seeking him would have been alive to his weakest call. He should have bitten the hand over his mouth—have kicked about in the undergrowth—anything to attract attention. Never in his life had he known himself such a weakling—and all through having had an overdose of salt water !

To be sure there would be many, many people sent to look for him. The expedition to Quebec could not possibly proceed without the admiral's son. Of course he would be found in the morning, but what a lot of trouble and anxiety he was giving his father ! Once more within sight of his friends, he would return the scarf to *La Bécasse*, and give him

good opportunity to escape with it. The Canadian must be made to overcome his base superstitions and carry the gold to the poor little heiress himself. It was not to be expected that officers of the King's Navy should concern themselves with affairs of that nature. So the boy reasoned with himself to keep up his courage.

The last of the daylight faded out above the tree-tops, and the night was cloudy, so that not a star enlivened the gloom. The groaning of chains and the creaking of timbers, which had kept Teddy awake during his first nights aboard ship, were soothing lullabies compared to the deathly stillness of the forest, broken only by the hum of the treacherous mosquitoes which feasted upon every uncovered portion of his body. Town-bred, he had never before passed a night in the open air, and now the pilot's stories of *loup-garous*, and *feux-follets*, of earthquakes and of Indians that he had been so proud to translate for his comrades, assumed a vivid and startling reality. There were also the rats! The sight of the old miser's dead face, the unlucky gold,

and poor Harry whose death it had probably caused—these things haunted him. The sound of heavy breathing near him could not all proceed from *La Bécasse!* He crawled nearer to make sure. Even so slight a movement wakened the wary Woodcock.

“What is it, little one?” he asked, stretching out his big hand till it rested on the boy’s cheek, which he found to be wet with tears. “Tut! I will not eat thee!”

“I fear not that. ’Tis for my father and my friends that I weep. Poor Harry!”

“He is with the English, dead or alive. His case is better than thine own—a prisoner.”

“I repine not at fate,” said Teddy, taking heart again. “’Tis the fortune of war, against which no man of English birth was ever known to complain.”

“Go to sleep like a man, then.”

The boy resolutely drew George’s hat over his face, as a shield from the mosquitoes, and shortly fell asleep with his head upon the big man’s arm.

TEDDY dreamt he was once more astride the Canadian pony, jogging gently along over the mud flats. He woke with a start. *La Bécasse* was carrying him through the forest by a path he must be discerning more by feeling than by sight, for it was still pitch dark.

“Let me down! Let me down!” cried Midshipman Rudell in great indignation. That an officer in the service of His Most Gracious Majesty, King George the Second, should be treated with such indignity by a Canadian peasant was too much. If a prisoner of war, he would at least claim the honours of war.

“Softly, my little man,” said the Woodcock. “I will let you walk here, if you promise not to run away from me when we come out to the open beach.”

This was hard, Teddy thought. Supposing he should hear English voices again, so soon as they reached the shore—must he not call out to British seamen?

“If I will not promise, what then?” he asked.

“Then I will gag you, tie your hands and feet, carry you over my shoulder and throw you into my canoe like a sack of flour.”

The Woodcock’s voice was naturally gruff, to harshness, and now there was no daylight to disclose how far it was belied by the kindness of his eyes.

“I promise!” said Teddy hastily.

Anything would be better than to suffer such indignity—and then there were the rats! He was afraid of them now, having seen what they could do. What might they not do to himself, should the Woodcock see fit to lay him down, gagged and helpless!

As it chanced, he had no temptation to use either his voice or his heels. The twinkling lights of the fleet, when at last they came in sight, to the eastward, seemed as remote as the very stars, from which the

screen of clouds had now withdrawn. The full tide was whispering with the boulders at the edge of the beach, but otherwise the stillness was unbroken. This was the time to cross to the mainland. *La Bécasse* brought forth his canoe from its hiding-place and set it gently afloat. As gently he lifted Teddy into the unsteady little craft and paddled him far out on the black water under the stars.

To avoid that dangerous maelstrom, the *gouffre*, he headed the canoe well to the eastward of Cap au Corbeau, the high, darkly-wooded promontory above which sea-gulls fluttered in the day time. The man and the boy landed at last upon the mountainous shore of the St. Lawrence, some miles above Malbaie, at a place named Eboulements. The day was breaking and already the white-throated sparrows were tuning up, first with an uncertain note or two, then with the full refrain :

“Farmer, Sow-the-wheat, Sow-the-wheat, Sow-the-wheat !”

This was somewhat ironical advice to a

habitant from a fertile island driven to that steep, wooded hillside, where giants appeared to have been playing at pitch and toss with the boulders. There was not a vestige of a path, but, so soon as he had hidden his canoe at the water's edge, *La Bécasse* struck upwards into the woods without hesitation. Teddy stumbled on after him, rubbing his eyes open. He was not accustomed to lose a night's sleep, nor to be abroad at dawn. Every bird-note was unfamiliar to his English ears. Not one of the songs was so continuous as that of the thrush or the sky-lark, but considerable melody was made as one bird after another took up the strain to greet the rising sun. The small midshipman's yawn was cut short midway by another sound that came to his ears.

“What's that? Running water?”

He spoke in English, forgetting for the moment that his guide could not understand. The tall Canadian was hastening onwards, crashing through the bushes towards the sound. Presently they came in sight of the brook, not a mild, limpid stream, apologizing

for existence, but a mad, turbulent, full-hearted body of water, plunging into paroxysms of foam, resting here and there in a deep black pool, careering gallantly over one huge rock in its path, splitting before another, to unite its halves in a roar, taking a leap of eight or ten feet, to swirl round in an eddy before making another plunge and still another far below in its wild haste to reach the St. Lawrence. Human voices were hushed by that of the water, expostulatory, defiant, soothing and awakening by turns.

It made Teddy forget how hungry he was. He sprang from stone to stone out into the middle of the torrent and seated himself upon a dry rock with his feet hanging over the edge of the cataract. Then he began to bounce small stones from that fall to the next far below. *La Bécasse* cut a fishing pole from an adjacent tree. He adjusted a rude hook to it and caught a grasshopper for bait. Teddy laughed when he saw what he was about.

“ You are pleased to be merry, this morning,

young sir, and I am glad, but we must eat or we shall starve, being yet miles away from a settlement. They say that fish are caught in these streams, though it is little I know about them.”

The Woodcock’s voice was drowned in the roar of the water. Teddy could not catch a word that he said, but he knew how to catch fish. He thrust his hand into the pocket of his jacket. Yes, the line was still there with which he had been trying his luck over the side of the *Diana* such a very, very long time ago. He cast it now into one of the still, dark pools just above the cataract and waited. The longed-for tug came instantly, and the next moment a trout, shining, spotted, was wriggling upon the grassy bank at the Woodcock’s feet.

“Bravo!” he cried. “Where learned you how to fish? One would think you had been here before!”

“I have fished in just such streams with my uncle in Scotland, so I well know where the trout love best to hide.”

“Go on, my child. Thou shalt catch

another one or two for our breakfast, while I build a fire to cook them. 'Tis little I know of fishing apart from the tommy-cods, smelts and sardines that can be carried home in a pail from our fisheries."

"The fisheries? What are they?"

"Saw you not those fences of brushwood in the river over at Isle aux Coudres?"

"To be sure. We boys wondered what they were."

"A device to fill hungry stomachs, that is all. There is a deep pool at the angle where the two fences meet. When the tide goes out there is still water left in the little pool, though all around is dry sand, and some silly little fishes are always caught there."

"Very easily too! It is a trap—that is not sport!"

"True! My children can take them in a pail. For myself, I catch the porpoise, though it too is a sheep of the ocean, which follows its leader into the same kind of a trap—only larger. When the tide is too far gone for them to get back into deep water, we go out in boats and spear them—but off to your

fishing, my little man. This trout will be cooked and eaten before we have his brother ready.”

Teddy caught enough to satisfy both the Woodcock's hunger and his own. Never did boy enjoy a meal more. He could not feel depressed even at the saying of *La Bécasse*:

“No danger of the English finding us here.”

This was more fun than being cooped up on a war ship. If only his father's mind were at rest concerning him—well! It soon would be. This clever woodsman would get him to Quebec almost as soon as the fleet, one ship having to wait for another, and all being delayed by fogs and by want of pilots.

By the time the sun was high enough to peer at them over the tree-tops, the man and the boy had pushed their way far onwards and upwards, choosing to follow generally the bed of a brook, where there was no undergrowth to delay them. Through every gorge one of these mountain streams was rushing, and the daring leaps Teddy would take from stone to stone across madcap torrents caused

the Woodcock to clap his hands. He himself had to advance more cautiously on account of his ankle, which was still troublesome, but his long legs enabled him to stride over dangerous spots, which Teddy took at a bound. The boy thought the top of that hill would never be reached. When they came at length to a comparatively level plateau, where were a few scattered clearings, there were still mountains beyond. Two or three log cabins were placed close together for company and protection, but the farms attached to each extended indefinitely towards the hills behind. *La Bécasse* opened one door after another—every house was empty and deserted.

“ I thought to have found my wife and children here,” he said. “ They must have gone on to Baie St. Paul for safety, having seen the ships.”

“ How many are there ? ”

“ You should best know that, my little admiral. There are enough to spread terror all along both banks of our great river, that I know. A good priest at Bic was looking

through a spy-glass at a frigate which had signalled for a pilot. One was decoyed on board. When he saw the French flag go down and the English flag go up he dropped stone dead."

"Not the pilot!"

"No, the priest."

"I meant not to ask about the ships," said Teddy, blushing—he could not have told why—"but about how many children you had."

"Twelve. The eldest is Marie. She is tall for her age, which is sixteen. She makes a second mother to the rest. Ah, but she is a good girl! She can handle a gun with the best and so strong is she, I am afraid to have her go near Quebec in case she is made to carry provisions into the town, like many of our women have to do. It is enough for her to take care of her little brothers and sisters. Next to Marie are the twins, and so on down to the small Emma, who is not yet one year old. Edmond is fourteen. He would fain have gone to the war, but I let him not. It was his place to stay at home

and work on the farm and help with the children and the old people."

"You had old folks in your home too?"

"Of course. We do not cast our parents adrift in Canada. There are the father of my wife, Hortense, and her cousin, a widow, besides my own father and mother, who are now very old, and my uncle, Octave."

"All these people live with you, and now you have taken in the little hunch-backed girl?"

"Certainly. One more or less matters not, where there are so many. I but hope there is bread enough for all, wherever they are. We must get to them before nightfall, if it be possible."

By the afternoon the sky was overcast and the air felt oppressively heavy, as if a thunderstorm were brewing. To Midshipman Rudell it seemed endless that trudge through the thick woods by a trail that only the Woodcock could discern. The miser's gold weighed him down. The brambles tore his uniform and scratched his face and hands. He was glad that the bruised foot of *La Bécasse* prevented

his travelling any faster. It would have been far easier to have retraced their steps and pursued their journey by canoe, but there was danger of capture by the English on the water route.

“The night is coming very early for June,” the Woodcock remarked, as he and the boy threw themselves down by a brookside for a few minutes’ rest. “Holy Mother! What is that?”

A strange rumbling sound made the two hold their breath in agonized suspense. Then the solid earth heaved beneath them. Huge rocks shook off their green mantles and went crashing down amongst the trees. Giant pines were torn up by the roots and heaved helplessly forward. *La Bécasse* crossed himself as he sprang up and seized the boy’s hand, muttering:

“The curse upon the gold!”

Another and more violent concussion threw them both to the ground. The rocky hillside directly in front slipped away as they watched, terror-stricken, to see it crushing and covering the tallest trees in its destructive course.

Teddy lay trembling and speechless with fright. The Woodcock rose only so far as his knees—to offer up a prayer for protection. Then he stood erect, confidence restored. What he saw was enough to daunt a stouter heart. The earthquake had changed the direction of the brook! The water damned back for a few moments sought for itself a new outlet. Now it was leaping as a live thing to carry man and boy before it like chips down the rocky gorge!

The Woodcock picked up Teddy as if he were a stray kitten. Regardless of his aching foot, he bounded aside and never halted till safe from the water at least. The next shock could not alarm him. One gets used, even to earthquakes, in a marvellously short time.

“Blessed be the saints! My home is on the Isle aux Coudres. We have no earthquakes there.”

“Are—are—are they plentiful here?” Teddy stammered. He could not help shrinking with fear into the arms of his protector.

“Not every week, nor even every year.

This one was not so bad as some I have been told about."

"But—but—it is not yet over!"

The rumblings continued at intervals.

"I will attend to that."

The Woodcock dropped again to his knees. What promises he made to the angry saints, whom he judged were responsible for the commotion, Teddy could only surmise. His tone was cheerful as ever when he rose and took the boy's hand.

"See! The falling trees have cleared the sky for us. It is not yet dark. Let us be going. We must haste far from here as quickly as we can. A number of these rocks and trees are loosened. They may fall upon us."

"Oh, but where can we go to be safe?"

"Just where we were going—to Baie St. Paul to seek my twelve. Praised be the saints they are not with us! I knew not what I said when I hoped to find them at *Les Eboulements*, rightly named. Two or three of my family might have been below that heap of earth now—so many of them—

and such lively lads as they are—never in the same place one minute, neither the boys nor the girls. Yet I repined that I found them not! St. Joseph knew best where they would be out of danger. Thank your own saint, my little man, that you are still alive on top, instead of being crushed beneath that mountain of falling rock or drowned by that runaway torrent of water. It may be that St. Joseph, knowing you to be English, made this upheaval to bar your advance.”

“Do you really think so, Mr. Woodcock?”

“It may be, but tremble not, for I have explained to him that you can do us no harm and are even doing good in carrying the miser’s gold to his granddaughter, who so greatly needs it.”

“It is accursed, I truly believe.”

This encounter with the seemingly supernatural was making Teddy share the superstitions of the habitant.

“I doubt it not,” replied the Woodcock. “Therefore the sooner you are relieved of it the better for us both.”

The rumblings continued for an hour or

more, and there were great roundabouts to be taken to avoid the débris of the destruction already accomplished, but, occasionally crossing himself, *La Bécasse* pressed onwards, with Teddy so close at his heels that often the branches bent backwards by the man switched smartly the boy's face. Oh, it was a terrible country this upon which a solitary little midshipman had strayed—one where not only the currents of the great river, but the rocks and streams of the mainland had leagued themselves against the invader. But when night found them still in the woods, Teddy was so worn out with fatigue that even another earthquake could not have wakened him up. He slept as soundly as if in his own little bunk aboard the *Diana*.

THE sun was high enough to shine through the branches and strike upon Teddy's face ere he awoke. *La Bécasse* was sitting beside him smoking the green tobacco he had plucked in one of the gardens they had gone through the day before.

“Why did you not wake me up to fish for our breakfast?” said the boy, springing up.

“Because I thought sleep was better for a child.”

“Child? I wish not to be called so. I am a midshipman.”

“What is that?”

“An officer of the fleet that is going up to take Quebec.”

“Be not too sure of that, my friend. There have been other fleets that have come up to

take Quebec—and gone back without it, if they went back at all. Perhaps you have never heard of the magician who lived on Orleans, so famous for such that it is known as the Isle of Sorcerers. When an English fleet was coming up the river, about fifty years ago—my Uncle Octave remembers it well—this magician had a little cabin built for himself at the eastern end of Orleans, and there he set up his cauldron for boiling his charms. It was the steam of that pot which made so great a fog in the river that the whole of the British ships lost their way and were wrecked between Egg Island and the coast of Labrador. But I do not believe it was the work of a sorcerer's spells, though my uncle does. I have faith that the saints preserved us then, as they will again, no matter how great a number of ships and men may be sent against us. St. Joseph will work a miracle to deliver us, even at the eleventh hour. It will be well for you to be with us, my boy, instead of with the heretic enemy, whom no saints can protect.”

Teddy was too much of a gentleman to

try to convert the Woodcock to another way of thinking.

“That is as it may be,” said he, “but meanwhile the fleet is afloat, well-manned and well-armed. François, the pilot, told me that he had heard there were more men now in arms against Canada than her whole population, all told.”

The Woodcock blew a long ring of smoke into the morning air.

“The greater the odds against us, the greater the glory when we win, my child.”

“Child—child—why will you keep on calling me a child when you are aware that I like it not?”

La Bécasse took off his cap of porpoise leather and made a deep bow.

“*Bien ! Monsieur Rudell, dit le petit amiral.* Will you permit your humble servant to comb your hair?”

“I wish you could cut it short for me. The bushes catch in it and tug me sorely. Besides, it blows in my eyes.”

“Thy mother would be loath to see thee lose thy curls, my ch——”

“Cut it short this instant with your hunting knife,” said Teddy.

The mention of his far-away mother had made his lip tremble, but this Canadian must be made to realize at once and for ever that he was no baby. *La Bécasse* was unwilling to use his knife for such a purpose, but he agreed that the boy would certainly be better fitted for the amount of bush travelling he had still to do if his locks were short, instead of long. So he sawed off Teddy's yellow hair, close to the nape of his neck.

“When I go back to town I shall get myself fitted for a wig,” said the lad, with an air that made the big Canadian double up with merriment.

Another day's tramping was lightened by the songs the Woodcock sang. He taught Teddy the words of *A la Clair Fontaine*, and was gratified to find that the boy had a good enough ear to pick up the tune quite readily. Anyone who had heard the gay whistling and singing would never have dreamt that it was a prisoner of war and his captor who were passing through the woods. It was evening

before they came down to the cluster of fifty houses in the valley at the head of St. Paul Bay—to find every one of them deserted !

“ Where can all the people have gone ? ” asked the tired boy. He wondered for how many more miles he would have to scramble on and on through a wilderness of rocks and woods and rushing streams before he should again hear the sound of another human voice than that of *La Bécasse*.

“ The men are in the army. The women and children have fled to the woods for fear of the British.”

“ But we have not come to make war upon helpless women and children ! ”

“ Have you not heard what was done at Gaspé, and at Miramichi last summer ? Your General Wolfe swept the whole country-side,¹

¹ *France and England in North America*, by Francis Parkman. (Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1892.) Montcalm & Wolfe, Vol. II, page 80. “ Wolfe set out on an errand but little to his liking. He had orders to proceed to Gaspé, Miramichi, and other settlements on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, destroy them, and disperse their inhabitants, a measure of needless and unpardonable rigour, which, while detesting it, he executed with characteristic thoroughness.”

burning villages and driving the families of poor fishermen from their homes."

"No doubt it was deemed necessary, or it would not have been done."

"The fortune of war!" replied the Woodcock carelessly. "Ah, where are my Hortense and the twelve?"

He was opening door after door in the village, or peering through the diamond-paned windows of those houses which were locked, but not a living creature was to be seen.

"Here is what has frightened them!" he cried at last, coming up to the church. To the door of it an official-looking document was tacked. "Read it to me, little admiral."

"It is in French. Can you not yourself——"

"The curé can read, but none of the habitants. We have no occasion. What says the Wolfe? I doubt not the proclamation is from him."

"It is indeed. He warns the Canadians of what will happen to them if they persist, 'with misplaced zeal and useless valour,' in fighting for their country."

The Woodcock laughed.

“That will not keep the good folk of Baie St. Paul very long from their homes. Here at least is a good place for us to sleep,” he continued, leading the way into an out-house where some hay had been left. “In the morning we shall set out for the highlands yonder to seek for the habitants.”

The next day was not far advanced when they came upon the first of the refugees.

These were the younger and stronger ones, who had been the most unwilling to depart from their homes and would be the first to return to them once the danger was past, as the Woodcock assured them it soon would be.

“The ships of the English can come no further up the river,” he said. “How can they cross the treacherous currents of the Traverse without the son of their admiral, who is here with me?”

He cast a sly glance at Teddy, but the boy was too much interested returning the earnest gaze of the habitants to heed what his guardian was saying. These people were all poorly clad and many of them looked half-

starved, but not one of them had the least doubt that the saints would ultimately free their land from the English invader.

“François, the pilot, thought it might not be such a bad thing to be conquered,” mused the boy, “but he had travelled. These poor folk may never have been even so far as Quebec.”

They told *La Bécasse* of the whereabouts of his large family. Soon some members of it were overtaken—an old woman bent nearly double under the load of branches she was carrying, a boy of eight with a gun almost as large as himself, trying to shoot “quacks,” and lastly a tired-looking woman carrying a baby. A couple of little ones toddled behind her, gathering wild strawberries. It would take a large quantity to stifle the craving of their small, but empty stomachs.

“My Hortense!” cried the Woodcock, running forward to clasp wife and child in his arms. The children set up a shout of welcome to their father, and the old woman laid down her load of firewood, which her son promptly lifted.

Family affection seemed to be fully as strong among the French as with the English, Teddy remarked. He felt a twinge of homesickness at the remembrance of his own mother and how she had wept at his departure. She would weep the more could she but see him now, with cropped head, standing forlorn, among these famished Canadians. But being a prisoner was not half so bad as she might imagine. The Woodcock introduced "the little admiral" to his family with a formality most gratifying to the midshipmite. Hortense and the rest of them gazed with awe at him—the first of the invaders they had seen. The boy with the gun came forward and presented arms. Teddy patted him on the head and assured him that when the English took Quebec he would intercede with the admiral, his father, for the protection of the whole family of Dominique Bonneau, called *La Bécasse*.

"He speaks French!" exclaimed the Woodcock's mother.

"Of course," replied her son, "and he can catch you the most beautiful trout with the

cunning little line he carries in his pocket. We must show it to Marie. Where is she, Hortense, that she lets you have all the care of the children? That is not like Marie. Is she at work in the fields? And where are the rest of the twelve?"

"Edmond and Charles are chopping wood for a fire, though it is little enough we have to cook. We thought the blaze would warm *grandpère* and uncle, who are always cold. They like not to work and warm themselves, as *grandemère* does."

The Woodcock drew from his shoulder four pairs of wild pigeons he had shot earlier in the day.

"Here is our supper. Give these to Marie to prepare. Where is she?"

"I can pluck them myself. My faith! But they are plump birds. How the boys will smile!"

"But Marie?" persisted the father.

They were walking towards an open space on the hillside, mottled with rude tents of every description and aglow with camp fires, but his quick eye could see no one that in

the least resembled his favourite daughter.

“ Marie,” said Hortense, slowly at length, “ is not here. She has gone to look for Marcelline, who is lost.”

“ Lost? How did that happen? ”

“ When the food grew still more scarce after you had gone from us, Marcelline said she would burden us no longer, but would go herself to seek her grandfather, who must have been taken to the next parish in one of the other boats.”

“ And you let her go? ”

“ I could not do otherwise, having not bread enough for my own, while Père Grison could buy up the whole countryside, if what they say of him be true.”

The Woodcock turned instinctively to Teddy who was walking beside him, listening to all that passed, and pinched his side to feel that the scarf containing the gold was still in its proper place.

“ But Marie—Marie——” he continued impatiently.

“ Marie ran off in search of the hunchback so soon as she heard she was gone—and alone.”

“ And that was——? ”

“ The day before yesterday.”

La Bécasse breathed hard.

“ The weather is warm, but the next parish is thirty miles away. Marcelline will not find her grandsire there, nor in the next again, for he is dead and buried over there on the Coudres.”

“ Vex not thyself,” said Hortense. “ There is not a habitant in the land who would not be kind to poor Marcelline, and Marie is too clever a maid to come to harm.”

“ She may starve to death in the woods ere ever she finds the hunchback.”

“ No! No! There are berries, and she has learned to fish in these brooks of the mainland, even as well as your little admiral here.”

“ She will pursue Marcelline, and Marcelline will pursue Père Grison even so far as Quebec. I know them both. At daybreak you and I will set out to seek them, little admiral.”

There was a loud outcry at this determination of husband and father, who was now surrounded by all of the old folk and the twelve—but one.

“ Marie is young and strong,” said her grandmother. “ She can protect herself.”

“ From bears or racoons perhaps—but soldiers ? ”

“ The English have not yet made a landing.”

“ They are now upon the Isle aux Coudres. Here is one I captured there.”

“ *Bien!* If they are no larger than this——”

“ Have a care, Hortense. He is the son of a great admiral. Therefore he understands all that you say and he will report to his father—if ere he sees him again. 'Twas not of the English soldiers I was thinking, but of the French. Our army is encamped upon the Beauport shore all the way from Montmorenci to Quebec. 'Twill be unpleasant to say the least, for any modest maid to pass camp after camp of idle soldiers from every province of France. Curse their white coats and their bold manners ! You and I will set out at dawn, little admiral. These who are left behind must pray that we arrive in time to defend the defenceless.”

For a reason that he could not have defined, Teddy felt ashamed when the women who gathered about the blazing camp fires that night turned questioning glances upon himself. The feeling deepened with the appeal he heard every aged person make to *La Bécasse* to bring back news of loved ones long absent at the war. Whether son or brother, husband or father were yet alive, none could tell. As the midshipman hearkened to those earnest evening prayers for protection against the dreaded invader, it began to dawn upon him that to sail up the St. Lawrence upon a conquering fleet was not so gallant an exploit as he had imagined. The Woodcock thought only of his Marie.

“’Tis the curse that follows the gold of Père Grison,” said he. “Never shall I be freed from it so long as the treasure is in any sense within my keeping. You too will be glad to be rid of the weight, little admiral, as you shall the instant we find Marcelline. My hope is the recovery of one who is worth more than her weight in gold to me.”

“ **W**HY can we not go on in a canoe ? ” asked Teddy of the Woodcock, who wakened him before he was well asleep, or so it seemed.

“ Because the missing maids are afoot. Moreover, the English ships are now going up the river. Look ! ”

Teddy climbed to a height whence he could view the blue St. Lawrence spreading itself twenty miles wide to take the green Isle aux Coudres on its bosom. He could even see, over the island, the main channel of the river, bordered by the further shore, a wavy purple band on the horizon. But what his young eyes most eagerly devoured was the sight of two stately, full-rigged war ships, already past the western end of the Coudres and moving quietly up the river with wind and

tide in their favour. The boy choked back a sob. What was it to him whether or not a little Canadian hunchback he had never seen should or should not receive her grandfather's gold? Let the Woodcock wind the scarf about himself, or around one of his own sons, and leave him free to paddle out into the channel and be taken aboard one of these passing ships. Every man in this vanguard of the fleet commanded by his father—down to the humblest sailor before the mast—must be aware of the great loss sustained in the capture of Midshipman Rudell. He would be welcomed back with a royal salute, and he would see to it that *La Bécasse* was well rewarded for his good treatment of himself. But to be held a prisoner like this while the whole of the English ships sailed past him up the river was too ridiculous. The Woodcock gathered the boy's thoughts from his face and spoke to him, cheerily:

“Look not so grave, my little admiral. I will take thee to Quebec, once we have rid ourselves of that cursed gold. You will be there as soon as your father, if not before him.

If he wins, he will take you with the city. If he loses, you will be at hand to intercede for his life with our Governor."

The idea was flattering to Teddy's youthful vanity, as his astute guardian knew it would be. The heart of the midshipmite began to swell with benevolent schemes—not with regard to the beaten British, that was an unthinkable contingency—but concerning the heartfelt plea he would make to General Wolfe for *La Bécasse* and his whole family, that they might be placed in even better circumstances than had been theirs previous to the war.

Before the day's journey was over, Teddy decided that the entire population of the north shore of the St. Lawrence, between Baie St. Paul and St. Joachim, must be included in his intercession. The poorest of them shared their scant supply of food with the Woodcock and himself. How the people could eat such stuff—black bread—tough horse flesh—the boy could not understand, but he did understand it—when he grew hungry enough. Everywhere he was treated

as an honoured guest, and the best of the rude fare was placed before him. The habitants even ceased their groanings over the arrival of the dreaded British, out of deference to the little admiral. By the time the last of the hills and rugged ravines had been crossed that lay between Baie St. Paul and St. Joachim, Teddy felt himself quite at home with the country people. He had often mourned over the newness of his uniform, which betrayed to all men aboard the *Diana* that this was his first voyage. Now he could not complain upon that score. His jacket was more like a battered veteran's than a spruce young midshipman's.

The first villager they encountered at St. Joachim knew all about the two missing girls. "Of course they were here."

"Together?"

"Certainly."

"Which way did they travel?"

"Back on the route they had come."

"Why?"

"Because our curé came home from the Coudres with Pierre and Antoine. He gave

to the girls the news that he had buried Père Grison down there on that island. He dried the tears of the little hunchback, and told her that she would not see her *grandpère* again till she went to heaven, though for myself I have doubts if the old miser is likely to be found in that blessed region. 'Twill take a long siege of purgatory to wipe out the stain of ill-gotten gold from his soul. The good father could not tell us what had become of the money."

"But the girls——" said *La Bécasse* impatiently. "They could not have gone back the way they came, else had we met them between here and Baie St. Paul."

A man who had been listening to all that passed now came forward. Teddy's heart sank as he recognized the pock-marked face of Antoine, which he had last seen in the boat from which poor Harry had jumped.

"Ah, *La Bécasse*," said the new-comer in a jocular tone, "you have got only thus far on your way to Quebec with your prisoner. Still, you are more lucky than we, who lost ours at the start."

“ I am not on the way to Quebec until I find my daughter and the granddaughter of Père Grison, who were last seen in this village.”

“ A tall, dark girl, like yourself, and a little, fair one, hunchbacked ? ”

“ Yes ! Yes ! Saw you them, Antoine ? ”

“ Those must have been the two maids that went with the curé yesterday across to the Island of Orleans.”

“ The Island of Orleans ? What did they there ? ”

“ I was upon the shore with Pierre, setting our shallop to rights, when we saw them embark in the priest’s canoe. He said he must go at once to St. François to shrive an old woman at the point of death. After that he would take the girls safely to Baie St. Paul in his canoe, which would be quicker, as well as easier for the little hunchback, than returning by land.”

“ Marie can paddle as well as any man,” said the Woodcock with fatherly pride.

“ She was doing so when they left here,” Antoine continued. “ She paddled in the bow,

the priest in the stern and the fair-haired girl sat in the middle between them."

"They are safe with the curé," said *La Bécasse*, sighing with relief.

"And now, will you go on to Quebec with your prisoner?"

"Not yet, Antoine. There is no need for haste. The boy is content to abide with me for a time. Are you not, young sir?"

Teddy nodded, though the frightened gaze he had fixed upon Antoine's face seemed to give the lie to his words. The Woodcock saw it not. His mind at rest concerning his Marie, he continued blithely:

"We shall first go back to Baie St. Paul to see that my family is made as comfortable as may be. Once I venture near Quebec, I run the risk of being made to rejoin the regiment of colonials to which I belong. My leave of absence is almost expired."

"Pierre and I also have no desire to be set to the shovelling again. We can sail you back to Baie St. Paul in our sloop, or, better still, would you not like to go first across to the Isle of Orleans to make certain that

the curé and the girls have yet left there ? ”

“ Thank you,” replied the Woodcock. “ The old woman may not live on this side of the island——”

“ No, indeed. Her home is at St. François, as I told you—on the southern side, but we could land straight across from here and then walk over the hill to the village. It would be quicker than sailing round the point. The priest could not reach her till late last night, nor leave till to-day ; of that I am sure.”

“ We may intercept him and save him a long journey to Baie St. Paul with the girls.”

“ That is so. Pierre is now down at the shallop. Come with me and we can start at once.”

Teddy’s spirits drooped still lower. He had no faith in these men, as he had in *La Bécasse*. The thought that if they knew he had the orphan’s gold upon his person they would certainly rob him of it, was not enlivening.

“ Were we not safer to go by land ? ” he whispered to the Woodcock.

“ Why, my little admiral, it is chiefly upon thy account that I have resolved to go by

water. The long rough tramp here has been too much for a sailor, like thyself. We run small risk now of capture by the English, though I see one of your ships already at the Traverse. The current at this end of the Isle of Orleans is so swift that at Cap Tourmente yonder, vessels must cross to the southern channel. We are free from them on this side."

" 'Tis of the gold I am thinking."

"Neither Pierre nor Antoine can guess that we have it, nor even that we know where it is. They are merely doing me a neighbourly turn in ferrying me across to find my daughter."

Teddy's suspicions were soothed, but not entirely banished. It was a beautiful, breezy July day. His eyes brightened when he was actually afloat and felt the sloop rocking through the rippling waves—his natural element. Surely no further ill could come to him. Part of the English fleet had passed the Island of Orleans, its full length of twenty miles, and must now be at last in the harbour of Quebec. The white sails of the other

ships approaching stood out upon the shining river to the eastward. It was trying thus to be cut off from the scene of action, but he must brave the fortune of war like a man. He was not yet so badly off as those poor habitants, driven from their homes, the means of support for wives and family entirely taken away.

Teddy was quite at home in a sailboat, and he did not understand why so much tacking was required to cross to Orleans, unless the boatmen wished to fill in time. To be sure their movements might be due to currents in the river with which he was unacquainted. It was early in the afternoon they had set sail, but the light was fading before they touched at the nearest point of the island, quite a distance, so said Antoine, from the house of the old woman the priest had come to see.

“There is no need for any of you to leave the boat,” he said. “I will walk over the hill alone to the house and discover if the priest is still there. If not, we should but waste time searching for him.”

“There is no house in sight from here,” said the Woodcock.

“St. François cannot be seen from this shore, as I have told you, but I can reach it shortly by a path I am acquainted with.”

He was gone a very long time. His mate, a man of few words, was not the brightest of company in his absence. Teddy started with alarm when Pierre suddenly turned his straight eye upon himself and asked the Woodcock why he called his prisoner the little admiral.

“Because his father is one of the admirals of the British fleet.”

“You hope to get a large reward when you take him to Quebec?”

“I had not thought about it,” replied the Woodcock, shrugging his shoulder.

“The other two—those you lost to us—were they also the sons of admirals?”

“No; I think not. But why blame me for losing them? You had captured none of them but for me. You should not have let your prisoner leap out of the boat.”

“Huh! Doubtless you made your little admiral shout to him to come.”

La Bécasse lowered his black brows in a manner so threatening that Pierre said no more.

Antoine came tramping back to the boat at length, looking very disconsolate, when his pock-marked face came near enough to be seen in the gathering dusk.

“The curé has taken the girls with him to see another sick person in the next village farther along the south shore of the island—St. Jean. We can follow them there, but not before daylight.”

“*Bien!*” said *La Bécasse* cheerfully. “So that I am sure they are really upon this island I care not how far I have to trudge to seek them.”

“It were best to leave the boy behind in the boat. It is many a mile to St. Jean, and he is not so good a walker as you are. Pierre can stay with him.”

Had Antoine been looking in that direction he might have judged, from the appealing glance Teddy shot at the Woodcock, how little

he relished this proposition, but *La Bécasse* was unwilling to part from his little admiral in any event and said decidedly:

“ I will not go without my prisoner.”

“ In the morning, then, we shall all start,” said Antoine. “ The curé would not think of leaving this island in the darkness, with two maids in his canoe, so we can camp in the woods and let the shallop take care of itself.”

TEDDY was now accustomed to sleeping in the open air, but he was more easily awakened than he had ever been. That night a careless hand thrown across his body by one of the men, apparently in his sleep, made the boy instantly alert. His first thought was of *La Bécasse*, but his own head was resting upon the Woodcock's sleeve. This hand had come from the other side. It was pitch dark, but a faint snore from that quarter suggested that the owner of the arm was sound asleep. Teddy stirred restlessly beneath it. The hand was promptly withdrawn, but not until the fingers of it had made a slight clutch at the boy's side.

"He is feeling the gold," thought Teddy. His heart beat like a steam hammer, as he

gently pinched the knee of the Woodcock to waken him.

“What ails thee, little admiral?” asked *La Bécasse* with a sleepy yawn. Teddy pretended he had but stirred in his sleep, though he was wide awake for the rest of the night.

“Go and bathe in the river, little admiral,” said Antoine to him at daybreak. “I have heard that the English are never done washing themselves. We will care for your clothing.”

“Yes, there will be time,” urged *La Bécasse*, who well knew how pleased young Teddy was at every opportunity for a swim. He could not understand why the boy should hesitate now.

“I will not go into the water there.”

“Leave the scarf with me,” said the Woodcock in an undertone, though Teddy feared it was overheard both by Pierre and Antoine, who were supposed to be gathering sticks for a fire. Teddy drew closer to his guardian, as if to begin undressing, and whispered, hurriedly:

“They know I have the gold.”

“Nonsense!” replied the Woodcock, but he added in a louder tone, “Perhaps it is even so. The water is too cold for bathing so early in the morning, and the tide is far out too.”

He raised no opposition to the boy’s refusal to be left alone with Pierre while he and Antoine climbed to the uplands in the centre of the island, looking further for the priest. In the end the whole four of them set out, for the two rogues could not trust one another. If anything was to be gained by keeping hold of this small prisoner, it must be share and share alike.

Throughout the long forenoon they tramped without seeing a human habitation. Once when tired little Teddy lagged behind somewhat he found Antoine, instead of *La Bécasse*, at his side.

“My little admiral,” began the insinuating voice. “*Voilà!* From the hilltop we are coming to, we can see the fleet of the English lying at anchor at the head of this island. How would it please you to slip away and be taken straight back to your father?”

“ My father would not welcome me if I betrayed a trust.”

“ What trust ? ”

The question came so unexpectedly that the boy crimsoned in the fear that he had betrayed himself.

“ I mean the trust of *La Bécasse*, whose prisoner I am.”

“ Tut ! All is fair in war. I never yet knew a prisoner who would not make his escape how and when he could.”

“ Perchance you are not accustomed to British ideas of honour. I am on parole.”

Teddy was quickening his pace to overtake the two men in front, but Antoine was bound to have his say :

“ Honour ? I own I know but little of the sort that will allow some idle boys off a ship to rob an old man of his savings.”

“ We did not rob him ! ” burst out Teddy impetuously. Certain that his secret was known he cried in despair :

“ Wait, Woodcock, wait for me ! ”

The big man obeyed. He had his gun, while Pierre and Antoine were both unarmed,

save for the short hatchets strung at their belts they used in cutting firewood, but Teddy's mind rapidly filled with alarms. Antoine made no more attempts to turn him from his allegiance, but whenever the boy noticed him exchanging words with Pierre he imagined they were concocting a plot to rob him of the gold—that hated gold of which he would be right glad to be relieved, but not in this way. He had in his composition just enough British stubbornness to resolve to carry out the design of delivering up the treasure to its rightful owner, and to no one else.

Night found them still in the wilds. They had come upon no trace either of a house or of the sick person Antoine professed to be seeking. *La Bécasse* began to share Teddy's suspicions of their companions. That night he was awake when the boy gently tweaked his ear. He responded with a pressure of the hand. Then the big man rolled over and over, as if in his sleep, snoring audibly the while. Over and over again in the darkness he turned, till he could safely crawl upon his knees. Teddy crept along after him. They

felt their way from tree to tree till quite beyond earshot of the slumbering pair they had left. The Woodcock rose to his feet and pulled the boy up to him.

“What do you fear, little admiral?”

“That those men are just watching a chance to kill us both for the gold I carry.”

“Bah! They are not murderers, but simple habitants.”

“You have said yourself that the lust of gold will make a fiend of any man.”

“Say rather this cruel war which makes the best of us have small regard for the lives of others. Pierre and Antoine are not the best, that I will allow. It may be as well for us to part company from them. My only thought has been that they might seek to decoy you away from me to demand a large ransom for you from the English.”

“Antoine has tried that.”

“And you would not go? Good! You are indeed my friend. Together we will save the gold for the orphan and thereby win the approval of the saints. But how to get off this cursed island I know not.”

“ Can we not find our way back to the sloop ? ”

“ We might, but what of that ? I could not manage her. I remarked that there were no oars. Antoine and Pierre know right well that I am a woodsman, not a sailor.”

“ But I am ! ”

“ Bravo ! The little admiral, to be sure ! If you be as good a sailor as you are a fisherman we shall not fare so badly. But come, let us make haste. If those two yonder miss us ere daybreak they may reach their boat before us, though I think I know more of the woods than Antoine, judging by the manner he has led us hither and thither upon this Isle of Sorcerers.”

“ ’Twas a sorcerer’s trick from the first,” said Teddy. “ I believe that neither priest nor maidens ever came here at all. Pierre and Antoine have had designs upon me, or upon what I carried, that is all.”

The Woodcock made no reply. Already he was feeling his way into a more open part of the woods, whence he hoped to see the river, though there was neither moon nor

stars to lighten it. All at once a great glare shone out to the westward. Then came the boom of an explosion—another ! and another ! The reflection of an immense fire lit up the gloomy sky. Was it possible that the bombardment had begun and that the doomed city was already in flames? No, the conflagration was lower down, undoubtedly in the harbour of Quebec. Was the British fleet afire? Had St. Joseph, their patron saint, truly come to the aid of the faithful Canadians?

How could the man and the boy, on that distant hill-top, guess that the blaze was from fire-ships, sent down by the French in the vain hope that they might drift in among the British ships and destroy them? Teddy trembled for the fate of the *Diana*, but the Woodcock rejoiced that this unlooked-for lightening of the horizon had come in the nick of time to enable him to locate the river.

“We shall not wait to look for a path,” said he, “but will take the straightest way down.”

Forward they plunged into the undergrowth. It was not such difficult travel as upon the

north shore of the St. Lawrence. The land was less mountainous and there were fewer ravines to cross. There were also clearings here and there, but through these the two sped in haste. The habitants appeared to have taken flight, even as from the Coudres. The glare from the westward continued bright enough to lighten their way until the eastern radiance from the rising sun took its place. At length they saw the mast of the shallop over the edge of the slope in front. Teddy raced to the boat with a shout of joy. It was echoed from the opposite direction! Pierre and Antoine were running along the beach at full speed towards him.

“ Oh, hurry, Woodcock, hurry ! ” he called in dismay. *La Bécasse* seemed more inclined to wait and see what the two had to say for themselves. They were his fellow-countrymen, if not his friends, and he was loath to believe the worst about them.

“ You jump in, little admiral, and get the sail ready. This comes from our having rested too long on that hill-top, watching the fireworks at Quebec. Still, I like not to steal

another man's boat—without due cause.”

When they saw that the Woodcock was waiting for them, the two stopped running. They walked forward, breathless, and it was a minute or two before Antoine could gasp :

“ Why did you leave us ? We might never have wakened till dawn but for the noise of the big guns at Quebec. At first we thought it was your own going off quite close to us, till we remembered you had left it in the boat.”

So he had ! The Woodcock was uncomfortably aware of the fact.

“ The little admiral and I made up our minds that you did not know where you were taking us. That is why we came away.”

“ Perdition upon you ! What a chase you have led us ! We feared some ill had befallen you. Harken ! ”

Antoine stepped nearer to the Woodcock. He was sure that the boy was too far off and too busy in the boat to hear what he said.

“ We know that you have the miser's gold, that the little admiral, as you call him, bears it tied about his body in your scarf. I

thought I felt it when I lifted him aboard. Now I am sure that is where it is. Why not share with us? We three might be rich for the rest of our lives. The little hunchback you talk of, if you are so silly as to yield the gold to her, will go into a convent and give it all to the church."

"She may do so if she wills, I want none of it."

"'Tis well enough to say so, but we know that you have kidnapped the girl, you and the priest between you."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that she left this island with the curé before ever we landed upon it. So much I discovered at the first house we visited."

"You did not tell us! You thought to play the kidnapper yourself, on my little admiral, eh?"

"Dare you accuse me——"

Teddy gave a shrill shout of warning, but the Woodcock was already on guard. He sprang aside in time to avoid a blow on the back of the head from Pierre's hatchet. *La Bécasse* was far more agile than his two

opponents. He leaped towards the boat, gave it a shove into the water as he sprang in, and raising his gun to his shoulder took deliberate aim. The two villains scuttled to cover behind trees, as Teddy hoisted the sail. Before Antoine and Pierre had recovered from their astonishment, their sloop, their prisoner, and the coveted gold had all slipped from their grasp. The little boat danced merrily forward to meet the rising sun.

“You had reason,” was the Woodcock’s sole commentary upon the motives of their late companions. Teddy was too anxious over the navigation of the sloop to cast another thought in their direction. As in swimming, so in sailing, the currents of the St. Lawrence were an unknown quantity to be reckoned with. *La Bécasse* warned him to keep clear of *La Traverse*, the dangerous one that swept across from Cap Tourmente around the end of Orleans. If caught in that, their boat would be whisked far over to the southern side of the island. Therefore the boy helmsman headed up-stream, thinking to get close to the northern mainland, and then

to put about and sail downwards with the tide, which seemed just on the turn. But it did not turn so soon as they expected. Mile after mile they sailed on upwards, and the Falls of Montmorenci were almost in sight before Teddy could safely put about.

“I am not so good a sailor as I thought,” he said disconsolately.

“Never mind,” the Woodcock replied. “So that we reach the north shore somewhere, sometime, it matters not in what parish.”

After tacking about in a most erratic manner, they did make the mainland at last, just above the place where the Montmorenci flows into the St. Lawrence.

“We shall go no farther by water,” said *La Bécasse*. “Commend me to a good trail through the woods. I might take you on from here to Quebec, little admiral. It is only seven miles away. Then I could deliver you into the care of our governor, but I doubt not you would as soon be with me.”

“Much sooner,” returned the boy promptly. “But what shall we do with the boat?”

“ It can stay there on the shore. In an hour or less it will be beached, high and dry. Before the tide comes in again, Antoine and Pierre will likely have found some one to ferry them over to their own parish. They will never think of looking for us so far up as Montmorenci. *Voilà!* There is something new here.”

The something new was a bank of earth thrown up on the strip of sand below the edge of the bluff they were about to climb. Piff! A bullet from it struck the side of the stranded sloop. The redoubt in question was sheltering armed men. One of them came forth as the pair drew nearer—a short, dark man in a grey uniform faced with red. His three-cornered hat was bordered with the same colour.

“ Thank the saints! Colony troops!” said *La Bécasse*. “ I know the man. He will let us pass.”

The soldier made no effort to detain them as soon as he recognized the Woodcock, but he warned him that it might not go so well with him if a certain sergeant of his company should catch sight of him.

“ No excuse about my being at home getting in my hay will suffice,” replied the Woodcock, with a light laugh. “ They want to keep us here shovelling up embankments for them the whole summer. Perdition take the white-coats ! I would you could have landed us upon the eastern bank of the Montmorenci, little admiral, then we should have been clear of our camp. But it is the fortune of war ! We must hasten to get away from here as soon as possible.”

MIDSHIPMAN RUDELL and the Woodcock clambered up the steep bank of the Beauport shore. When the top was gained, Teddy looked with his heart in his eyes over to the whole British fleet riding proudly at anchor in the harbour of Quebec. He counted twenty-two vessels, five frigates, nineteen sloops of war, and was quite sure he identified the *Diana* at the extreme left. What chance had the defiant city against such an array? She seemed to be making elaborate preparations, nevertheless. As far as he could see along the Beauport bluff was one redoubt after another, manned by white coats, sauntering about in idle fashion while the grey coats did the work.

“See those beavers digging away in the hot sun?” said *La Bécasse*. “I wish not to

rejoin them, so hasten, little admiral. We must lose no time in getting to the other side of the Montmorenci. Had the tide been low we might have crossed down on the beach without running the risk of coming up here among these shovellers, that are but too anxious to add to their numbers. We must keep close to the bank of the stream and follow it to a ford I know about, which is a mile back in the woods."

Teddy tore himself away from the sight of the English fleet to do as he was bidden. He and his guide went beyond the natural steps, which in one place form the steep bank of the brown, foam-flecked Montmorenci River.

"Now we are safe," said the Woodcock, when they had crossed to the eastern shore of it. "We can keep along this bank till we come to a trail leading eastward, which is well worn, at least so far as St. Joachim."

But walking ahead of Teddy, he suddenly came to a full stop.

"Saints above!" he whispered. "I see a red-coat through the trees. The deuce take that sentry we met on the sands. Why did

he not tell us that the English had landed here ? ”

There was no doubt about it, though the roar of the Montmorenci, rushing in turbulent rapids to get ready for its mighty leap over the cliff, had drowned bugle call or other sound that might have given warning.

“ You stay here, little admiral, till I go forward on a scout and see if the company be a large one.”

The Woodcock fell flat on his stomach and crept forward among the rocks and bushes out of sight. Before he returned, Teddy had time for many reflections :

“ Here is my chance to put an end to this ceaseless trailing to and fro in the peril of my life, enduring hardships for which there is no occasion. These English are not sailors, to be sure, but they could tell by the remains of my uniform that I am really a midshipman off the fleet. No doubt every one of them, down to the humblest in the ranks, has heard the story of my capture on the Coudres. I wish the Woodcock trusted me not so fully. Would he were but the harsh and cruel enemy

one expects to meet in the enemy's country !

“ What would become of the gold in my care, should I run off to my friends ? Did my father command on land it would be as safe with him as with myself. But the military officer to whom I should be taken, if I made my presence known to these red-coats, might look upon this weary bandage as treasure trove, even as George and Harry did. What then would become of the poor little hunchback ?

Teddy was fidgety in body, as in mind, but presently he lay still in the undergrowth. Before long, wearied with much tramping, and the wakeful nights he had spent upon the Isle of Orleans, he fell sound asleep. What wakened him he never knew, but, as he threw out his arms, stretching himself in a luxurious yawn, one relaxed hand fell upon a bare, warm human back ! In alarm the boy tried to spring to his feet. Instantly he was pulled down beside a naked savage, the sort he had read about, but never before laid eyes upon. The Indian was not disposed to harm him, but he laid a warning finger to his

lips and touched the tomahawk in his waist clout so suggestively that Teddy had no difficulty in comprehending what would happen should he dare to move or to cry out. He used his eyes, however, and soon discovered that there was another Indian stretched out a few yards away, and still another and another farther on, as far as he could peer through the tall-growing ferns and bushes. It was an ambush!

It was for the English that these dusky warriors were lying in wait. How was he to give warning? Was it to be his fate to witness a wholesale massacre of his countrymen? Where was the Woodcock? Had he been captured and scalped, or had he joined these bloodthirsty allies of the French? It was perhaps only his youth that had saved himself from destruction. He had read that the North American Indians liked to adopt children, and no doubt he had been mistaken for a child, lying there in the long grass. Through his mind there flashed the picture of himself arrayed in war paint and feathers, stalking through the woods as an Indian

brave. The prospect was not so pleasing as it had been at his own fireside.

Presently he heard a whispered conversation close at hand. Surely that was the voice of the Woodcock! The other speaker was a Canadian partisan officer in charge of the Indians. So Teddy gathered from what he overheard :

“ You know the ford ? ”

“ Certainly,” replied *La Bécasse*. “ I crossed it an hour ago with my little son who is lying yonder.”

“ Well, you must go back over it again and carry this word to the Chevalier de Lévis. My Indians have surrounded the British here. Ask him to order M. de Repentigny, whose company is nearest the ford, to cross to our assistance with his eleven hundred Canadians. Not one of these two thousand English shall escape.”

“ *Bien*, sir ! I will take my boy and go.”

“ Leave the child here with me. You will travel more quickly alone.”

“ He is a capital runner and can well keep up with me.”

“*Pouf!* He will get hungry or dry and will want to be carried, who knows?”

Teddy hoped with all his heart that *La Bécasse* would go off without him. Then he should feel at liberty to steal in among the English and give them news of the ambushade. Some such thought may have occurred to the Woodcock. He refused to leave the little admiral behind.

“Confound you for an obstinate cur!” exclaimed the partisan officer. “Take your brat and be gone!”

Teddy went reluctantly enough to the side of his guardian, but was obliged to set off with him at full speed back to the ford, a mile distant. The boy's conscience was distracted. How could he possibly help a guide in leading others to the aid of those who were bent upon destroying the English? But it looked at first as if no such service would be required of him. No sooner had the two crossed to the side of the Montmorenci held by the French, than *La Bécasse* was seen and recognized by a sergeant of the militia company to which he belonged.

“ Here you are, renegade ! ” said he, “ and high time it is you were back from taking your family to the mainland. The other men from the Coudres returned to their posts long ago. It is now a month and more since you went away. See that you report for duty immediately.”

“ I cannot, until I have delivered a message of which I am the bearer to M. de Lévis.”

“ From whom, pray ? ”

“ From the commander of the Indians across the river.”

“ There are no Indians on the other side of the Montmorenci. You will gain naught by lying.”

“ Nine hundred of them have encircled the British camp. I am sent to tell the General of it.”

“ If that be all, I can take the message myself.”

“ ’Tis not all, but I have no right to tell you even so much. You must not delay me. I was urged to deliver the message with all speed.”

“ At least I shall go with you to see whether or not you are lying.”

It was two miles to the lodging of General Lévis. *La Bécasse* became tongue-tied with awe when ushered into his presence, and it was the sergeant who had to explain his errand.

“A ford up here across the Montmorenci?” exclaimed the General. “How is it that I have never heard of it? I must send M. de Repentigny to guard it at once.”

“You are implored to send him over it, sir, to support the Indians.”

“I regard the wishes of none but General Montcalm and Governor Vaudreuil. I should be blamed did I bring on a general engagement before we are ready for it, and without consulting my superiors. Besides, sergeant, I am told that the English have double the number you have stated encamped at Montmorenci.”

“Even should the whole British army be across the stream from us, sir, they cannot judge of our strength. They are not bush fighters like our Canadians, who can easily make good their escape through the woods, if likely to be defeated. Moreover, the English live in deadly fear of our savage allies. They

would scatter like sheep at the first war whoop."

"Oh, sir," broke in the Woodcock eagerly, "the moments are precious! The Indians have now been some time in ambush. Their patience will soon be spent, if no help appears."

"Will you then, my good fellow, undertake to guide M. de Repentigny and his men to the ford, of whose existence I still have doubts?"

"I crossed it twice to-day with the boy here, and the water came no farther than his knees."

"He will be proud to show the way to our forces," said the sergeant.

"He does not appear so, nor does his son, though the stripling has the more intelligent face of the two. Perchance the little one could do the trick alone!" Teddy could not contain himself at this proposal.

"Indeed, General Lévis, it would be very, very rash to make an attempt to overcome these British. Their numbers are far too great."

De Lévis and his officers smiled amiably at the small boy's outburst.

"Who is this infant that presumes to advise our commander?" one asked.

"His language is not that of the habitants," said de Lévis. "I could almost fancy him to be English. Are you, my child?"

"Certainly!" said Teddy, making a formal salute to the Chevalier, which that gentleman returned with due gravity. "I am the son of Admiral Rudell, of the fleet now before Quebec. We came to conquer, but not to fight with savage barbarians. It were best to have a care how any dastardly ambushes be attempted."

De Lévis laughed.

"Are you not enough of a soldier to understand, my little man, that your advice against it is the first thing that has made me feel inclined to favour the proposed expedition? Whether you be indeed an admiral's son or not, it will be well for us to leave you out of this scheme."

Teddy felt humbled indeed. He had done harm, where he had hoped to be of service

to his country. In the meekest of tones he asked :

“ Please, sir, let me go with *La Bécasse*. Once he has shown where the ford is, need he go any farther ? ”

“ You appear wondrous fond of your habitant.”

“ He has been kind to me. In truth he saved my life when the rocks and streams rose up against me at Les Eboulements. I desire that he, and he alone, may receive from the English the large sum that will be paid for my ransom.”

Again the other officers laughed in a manner most irritating to young Teddy, but de Lévis regarded him seriously :

“ Quite right, young sir. You are worth a large ransom, whether the English decide to pay it for you or not. You are assuredly safer with this man than you could be with any other, being evidently bound to him with chains of gratitude and affection, the hardest to break. I doubt if it would be in my power to keep hold of you. Therefore, go with your Woodcock, by all means.

You, sergeant, can tell M. de Repentigny to use his own judgment about making the proposed attempt. I shall immediately send a messenger to General Montcalm asking for instructions. We may all be ordered to follow you over the ford."

IT was with a heavy heart that young Teddy set out again by the side of *La Bécasse*. True, he had gained his wish in not being separated from him, but he was now actually a part of an expedition bent upon massacring his own countrymen. Why was he always wise too late? If he had held his tongue before those French gentlemen, they would have passed the whole affair over as of no consequence, but of course when a British officer declared against the undertaking they would be keen for it. It would have been far better for himself to have stayed with the Chevalier de Lévis, one of his own class and a much more powerful protector, should such be needed, than this poor habitant with whose fortunes he had linked his own. He must now follow

wherever the Woodcock chose to lead, even at the risk of being a traitor to his own country.

But when they returned to Captain Repentigny, that officer was dubious about taking upon himself the responsibility of engaging in an affair of such importance as this might prove to be.

“ You say that General de Lévis has sent to the Marquis de Montcalm for orders? Then I also will wait till they come. I shall guard the ford, but I will not move my men across it without a distinct command from my superior officer.”

Teddy could have thrown his cap into the air. He had long since parted with George's all-too-large hat, which caught in the bushes he had to pass through, but this small round one of porpoise leather, like the Woodcock's own, which he had picked up at Baie St. Paul, was equally well adapted for the expression of hilarity, had he dared venture upon such. He tried to pucker his young face into wrinkles of disappointment, but he could not keep the joyous relief from shining in his eyes.

Seeing there was no glory to be gained, the sergeant said to *La Bécasse* :

“ I decline to mix myself further in the matter. You must take the message back to head-quarters.”

The Woodcock pleaded hard to be allowed to carry the verdict to the Canadian officer in charge of the Indians instead. Once he was across the Montmorenci again, he could whistle defiance to the sergeant or anyone else who should try to keep him from making his way straight back to his family. The sergeant doubtless suspected this.

“ You shall not go back over the river, Bonneau,” he said. “ Has not the boy told us he was English and that a handsome reward would be given for his return ? You would like a chance to claim that, would you not, my fine fellow ? This little imp here would embrace the opportunity to show his countrymen the way across the ford to surround us, since we are not able to assist those who are surrounding them.”

“ The lad invented that tale about being English merely to further our ends. He

is really my own son, who has been in the seminary at Quebec and so does not talk like a habitant."

"Bah! The Chevalier is not one to be deceived."

"Had he believed what the boy said, think you he would have let him come off here with me?"

"He gave no leave for you to go farther than the ford, and no farther shall you go. No, *M. Dominique Bonneau, dit La Bécasse*, seeing that you are so anxious to get rid of my company, I shall stay with you till I see your message safely delivered to M. de Lévis. Then you shall come back with me into the ranks, where you belong."

They were about half-way back to headquarters, when they heard a sharp fusillade from the other side of the Montmorenci.

"What's that?" exclaimed the sergeant, and the three stopped to listen.

"'Tis, I suspect, the Indians who have grown weary of waiting for support. They have opened fire upon the nearest English."

The Woodcock's suspicions proved to be

well founded, though it was several days before he heard that the redskins had killed about one hundred and fifty of the enemy before they withdrew from their ambushade.

General Lévis received the second message as coolly as he had done the first.

“*Bien!* The Marquis de Montcalm has sent me word that he wishes not to disturb the English at Montmorenci. They are better to amuse themselves there, where they can do no harm, than to make mischief for us nearer to Quebec.”

The French generals were indeed pleased to remark that the British army had been divided into three parts, each half a dozen miles from the other. It would be impossible to bring them together quickly upon a sudden alarm. Besides the Montmorenci contingent, a section was encamped at the western end of the Isle of Orleans, and a third had taken post at Point Lévis, whence Quebec was to be bombarded. Wolfe himself was at Montmorenci, and it was reported among the troops that he and de Lévis had an accidental opportunity to stare steadily

at one another across the narrow, impassable stream. Each would recognize in the other a foeman worthy of his steel, ere he withdrew to his own side.

Meanwhile the Woodcock was caught in a trap.

“The sergeant says I must go to my place in the trenches along with the rest of his company. What will you do, little admiral? It might be better for thee to seek the protection of General Lévis—but—the gold of Marcelline—she would never see it? They are great gamblers, these soldiers of France. The higher the rank of the officer, the greater the stakes. They would welcome you gladly should they guess the treasure you carried.”

“Take it yourself and let me go! I can be returned to my own people at the next exchange of prisoners.”

“The gold would not be safe with me, not for a day, nor an hour, even if I were willing to risk the curse of carrying it. My arms and clothing will be examined as soon as I return to the ranks. So small a child

as yourself will never be suspected of having aught of value upon him—but your pardon, little admiral! I have imposed upon you a charge greater than you are willing or able to bear.”

“I am both willing and able,” replied Teddy, trying to make his height an inch greater by stretching. “Have I yet failed you?”

“No, you have not, *Monsieur Edouard Rudell.*”

“Then I swear to you, here and now, that I will not seek to rejoin my own people until I have delivered into her own hands the inheritance of the orphan girl which my comrades and myself, in an idle hour, took from her grandfather. So much atonement we are in honour bound to make.”

“You will stay with me?”

“I will stay with you. I doubt not that ere long you will find a means to get off down the river again to your family.”

“Trust me for that!” said the Woodcock with a gay laugh.

But the July days wore on and no oppor-

tunity for leaving this compulsory service occurred. The sergeant kept a watchful eye upon the pair. It was well for Teddy that the month he had spent with *La Bécasse* had taught him other things than how to shoot "quacks," to be content with homely Canadian fare, and to sing the songs of the country. He had mastered the secret of meeting hard fortune with a smile.

The very last day of the month was as warm as a July day in Canada can be. Teddy had become so accustomed to resting anywhere and everywhere that he was sound asleep in the trenches at seven o'clock in the morning when the booming of big guns woke him.

"'Tis nothing," said the Woodcock. "Sleep as long as you can, little admiral. The English will make the most noise at the point where they are *not* going to make the real attack."

Still it was very trying for a young gentleman who had never before been under fire to see an occasional bomb come crashing through the trees from the other side of

the Montmorenci. Ere long the ships in the great river began to take a hand in the game. What if he should be killed by a cannon ball from the *Diana*, from one of those very guns which he and his comrades had been wont to pat so lovingly, calling them by nicknames, as they picture the havoc they would make among the rascally Frenchmen? Teddy was but half awake and not up to his usual stout-heartedness, or he would not have fallen into such a panic of fear. He clung to *La Bécasse* and begged him to take him out of harm's way.

“Why, my little admiral, I never thought thee a coward!”

“But I am on the wrong side. It would serve me right to be shot.”

“It would take a bigger head than thine or mine to determine the rights or wrongs of this contest,” said the Woodcock slowly. “We are both right to fight for our own, to obey the orders of our superiors—that is all our affairs.”

“But I broke the orders of my superior in the spirit at least—when I left my

ship without special permission. Now I must suffer. One of her very guns will surely find me and kill me like a dog in this ditch."

"Rubbish! Thou art too small to be hit by a cannon ball. See! That one went clear over our camp, touching nobody."

The next one proved not so harmless. Poor Teddy grovelled in the earth when he heard the groans of men in agony. The Woodcock laid down his gun and took the boy in his arms.

"Hearken, little admiral. The saints will surely not permit an infant, such as thyself, to be slain in this quarrel of grown men."

Teddy had never before found consolation in his own insignificance. Even while his guardian was administering comfort, a shell burst near them with a loud explosion. A fragment of it struck the boy's side and knocked him over. As he recovered from the shock, he put his hand to his waist expecting to feel blood trickling down, but there was none. *La Bécasse*, less fortunate,

was cut in the shoulder, but he made light of his own wound in his eagerness to assure himself of the safety of his young charge.

“Dost know what saved thee, little admiral? The cuirass of gold that you wear! Père Grison’s gold has done good for the first time in its existence. Perchance the curse is removed. It is a miracle!”

Miracle or not, young Teddy, having once come to close quarters with a bursting bomb, began to lose his fear of them. He had heard perhaps that lightning never strikes twice in the same place.

“The enemy will certainly make their assault nearer than this to Quebec, where the bank is not so steep,” said the Woodcock, “somewhere between the ravine at Beauport and the St. Charles River.”

“Why, then, are the white-coats crowding here so fast, if nothing serious is expected?”

“That I cannot tell, but you know your countrymen well enough, little admiral, to be sure that they will not try to come up the bank where we climbed it on arrival after the sentry let us pass.”

“ Yes! It is impossible to break the French lines there.”

But as the day wore on, it seemed as if the impossible were about to be attempted.

Teddy had often imagined how fine an experience it would be to be actually in a battle, but he had always thought of himself at the end whence the shot proceeded, not at the spot where it fell. That was far different. The officers might know what was going on, but the rank and file did not. To lie, trembling, in a trench was not half so heroic a proceeding as Master Rudell had fancied. If only he could be up and about to see what was going on, he would be willing to take his chances of being hit, but fearful of the consequences, the Woodcock would not let the boy out of his sight.

“ What is that? What is that? ”

There was a furious uproar at the front, accompanied by what seemed to be the belching forth of every gun from every battery from Beauport to the Sault.

“ The crazy Englishmen are really trying to climb the bank at this place—the worst

and the steepest! Ah, ha! Little admiral! Your countrymen have not learned much since Ticonderoga. Fools! Why did they not send scouts across the ford to find out which was the best place to attack our lines? ”

“ Perhaps, like your General Lévis, they did not know the ford was there.”

“ It should have been their part to find out if there was not one. My faith! They will suffer again for their reckless stupidity in blundering ahead without proper information.”

Teddy could not be brought to believe that the English were in any danger.

“ They will climb that hill like mountain goats, if the Highlandmen are there,” said he, having heard of their invincible charges. But he would not distress *La Bécasse* by dwelling upon this. How hot it was! How hard to be lying there while great deeds were being done within a hundred yards of him! Still, the issues of the fight might be what they chose, if only he could get a drink of water!

“Patience, little admiral,” said the Woodcock. “It is going to rain.”

Patience is the hardest thing in the world to achieve when one is lying in a rough trench exposed to—one knows not what! Being young and tender-hearted, Teddy felt like apologizing to the men about him every time one of them was hit, though the Woodcock assured him that many more of his own countrymen were falling. The boy was spared the actual sight of their mowing down in the mad attempt to storm the French entrenchment. His imagination filled in the unseen. He heard the wild vivas of the French, as their gunners drove the British back across the strand with heavy loss. Some of them might have come to closer quarters, but in the thick of the fight the threatened storm broke above the heads of the combatants. Behind sheltering sheets of rain the British made good their retreat.

Teddy only knew that he was wet to the skin. When the thunder had retired to its caves in the distant mountains and the rain had spent itself, a very bedraggled

little boy pulled himself out of a muddy ditch and ran forward to the redoubt to peer over at the field of battle. What he saw there made him run with all haste back to his guardian, who was quietly seated, wiping the raindrops from his treasured musket.

“Woodcock! Woodcock! The Indians are all down below there. Think you they will harm the poor wounded men?”

“They may scalp a few.”

“Oh, it is terrible—I cannot bear the sight——”

“Look not at it. Stay here with me.”

“I am English, remember. I must go—I must help! Come with me, Woodcock. Surely no one would seek to prevent us going to the Flats on such an errand.”

La Bécasse rose leisurely and stretched himself. He too was thoroughly drenched, and he was stiffened besides with lying so long watching for the first of the red-coats to appear over the brink of the hill. He had not had a shot at one, for none had gained the summit.

“I have had enough of this business,” he said. “Yes, I will go with you, little admiral. Perhaps we can make our escape in the confusion.”

THE sergeant who had been so determined to keep hold of the Woodcock was nowhere to be seen. An officer of higher grade readily gave him permission to go below the bluff to succour the wounded of both nations from the Indians, as many of the French were doing. The grassy banks were wet and slippery with more than the rainfall, but the two gained the lower level all the more quickly on that account. Teddy ran like a hare straight towards a red-coat whom the Indians had not yet discovered. The soldier was lying on his face, but he moved a leg, so he was not dead. To save even one of his countrymen from a horrible fate would be something worth doing. It was better by far than having taken part in the action, especially on the wrong side.

Attracted by the sight of a small boy running across the flats, an Indian ran too, to see the object of the race. He reached the wounded soldier first. With a yell of delight, he flourished his tomahawk to bring down a finishing stroke, but Teddy sprang at his uplifted arm, shrieking in French :

“ No ! No ! You must not ! It is forbidden ! ”

The Indian paid no more heed to him than if he had been a mosquito to be brushed off before he could proceed with the business in hand. Shaken off, Teddy fell to the ground. The savage turned over the wounded man to discover if anything about his apparel took his fancy before he should add his scalp to the bleeding collection already hanging from his waist.

La Bécasse would have been unwilling to risk his own scalp in the saving of any full-grown Englishman, but he had no mind to see the little admiral captured or killed by a redskin. It was he who appeared at the Indian's back, and grasped his arms from behind as in a vice.

“ Now, then ! Run, Little Admiral ! ”

“ I will not go without this wounded soldier.” The boy had dropped to his knees at the man’s side. “ He is alive and he begs me not to leave him to the mercy of the savages.”

“ *Diantre !* I cannot hold this villain for ever, and more of his kind will surround us directly. They are the allies of the French and we are forbidden to ill-treat them.”

“ Tie up his hands, so that he can do no more mischief.”

“ Had I my scarf I might do so, but you know where that is.”

“ It were better far to let the gold go and save this poor man.”

“ Many red-coats like him have been slain this day, as you may see for yourself. Haste thee out of harm’s way, little admiral ! This wretch squirms so, I cannot hold him much longer.”

The sight of rescuers had so far revived the wounded soldier that he sat up to see what was going on, and added his remarks to the controversy.

“Faith an’ I thought I was dead for shure that toime. I felt the ridskin nosin’ about me and said I to meself, ‘It’s all up wid Pat now.’ But here I be, yet aloive, an’ all thim good prayers I said gone to waste. Well, mebbe I won’t be afther havin’ the chants to say thim agin when I’m called for shure. Give the brute a crack on the crown an’ help me up.”

“The man who holds him is French and knows no English,” Teddy replied.

“Shure, an’ a French crack will do for him as good as an English wan, if it is harrd enough.”

“But a Frenchman cannot kill an ally.”

“By the powers above! It’s not an ally he is, but an ally-gator—an’—an’ where did you spring from yourself, ye little spalpeen?”

“I am an offic——” began Teddy, and then stopped. This was no time to assert his dignity. “Give us your belt and we’ll tie him up,” he curtly ordered. With the boy’s help the wounded Irishman managed to unbuckle the stout belt he was wearing,

and with this the Woodcock strapped up the Indian's arms so securely that he could do nothing but run away, which he speedily did.

"Come now, we will help you to a place of safety," said Teddy, and the Woodcock could do no less than raise the soldier to his feet.

"It's in the right leg and the left shoulder I'm shot," said he cheerfully. "Blessed be the saints me throuble is not all on the wan side."

Teddy translated this speech to *La Bécasse* and added :

"He is of your religion. The saints will approve your helping him, I am sure."

"It is a miracle! I thought all the English were heretics."

"Not at all. This man keeps on praising the Virgin for having sent us to his relief."

La Bécasse devoutly crossed himself and the Irishman, noting the act, did the same, as he said :

"Be jabers, but the big fellow understands English, even if he don't spake it. Gimme yer shoulder, ye broth of a bhoys."

He threw his sound arm across the broad back of the Woodcock, and landed a good part of his weight upon him. Teddy supported him on the other side, and besought him not to talk so much as he was but calling attention to himself and them. If too conspicuous they might be surrounded by Indians. But the Irishman's volubility was hard to stop.

"How is it you're French an' haven't a white coat on?" he asked, for he refused to believe that *La Bécasse* could not understand him. It was Teddy who answered.

"He belongs not to the regular army, but to the militia."

"Begorra, then he's one o' thim Canadians what stud up agin us when we was thryin' to climb that shlippery hill. Ginerall Wolfe thought they couldn't foight, but by hokey! they can hould fast under cover. Thy bhoys have been in such a deuce of a stew to get acrost the river to our own camp that divil a bit of a boat have they left for us."

The tide was still out and there was no danger in fording the Montmorenci at its

mouth, but great danger of being taken captive by the English, so soon as the other side was reached. Therefore the Woodcock advised the wounded grenadier to cross the stream alone. This he declared himself quite unable to do.

“Shure, I’ll tell thim ye’re a deserter,” said he. “Not a man of ours would be afther hurtin’ a chap what has brung bak wan of their own wounded.”

But the grown-up rescuer cared not to come within speaking distance of the English.

“You can shout once we have you over the ford,” said Teddy. “Some of your comrades will surely come down the hill after you. We must go on.”

“An’ where will yez be goin’ on to?”

“Down the river in a boat, if we can get one.”

“Yez are deserters?”

Teddy liked not the word.

“Not I; nor is this man. He has to go back to attend to his crops.”

“Wan good turrrn deserves another. I seen a boat this minnit behind that point o’ rock

over there at the other side of the ford.”

“ So do I, but it is full of red-coats.”

“ They’re coming ashore ! Whirra ! Whirra ! Whoo ! ”

The Irishman set up such a bellowing that the Woodcock nearly dropped him in the middle of the river he was helping him to cross. But the soldier clung to him tightly, and *La Bécasse* in his excitement cursed the little admiral who had led him into this scrape. Certainly he would be taken prisoner by the British. What, then, would become of Hortense and the twelve, of the little hunchback and her grandfather’s gold ? The little admiral had but to tell who he was to be treated with respect and taken back to his father. The case of his captor would be very different. It was hard that the lad had forsaken him thus, after all the weeks they had passed together, but Teddy had no intention of forsaking his friend. The designs of the grenadier were also amicable. He was evidently a favourite in the ranks, and well known to more than his own company. The men in the boat belonged to the

15th Regiment, stationed at Point Lévis. As they ran across the sands to greet the waders one of them cried :

“ It’s not yourself, Pat ? We all thought you was dead and done for ! ”

“ Did yez niver hear tell that a cat an’ an Irishman has nine loives ? I’m ploughed up a bit, but hearty as iver, thanks to these deserters who’re afther wantin’ the loan o’ yer boat.”

The men looked suspiciously at Teddy and the Woodcock, but actions speak louder than words. The Woodcock was not in uniform, and here he had been helping a Britisher to the safer side of the stream.

“ They are welcome to the boat, since we have no more use for it. It would not carry us all to Point Lévis, so we rowed back here. It may be seaworthy enough for one man and a boy.”

Teddy hardly waited to hear what they said. A word in the ear of the Woodcock, who was thankful to be rid of the loquacious Irishman, a race over the mud flats, a shove to the boat, and they were off !

“It leaks!” exclaimed *La Bécasse* before they had been long afloat. “That is the reason they were so willing to let us have it. No matter. We must keep close to the shore, little admiral, and you shall bail her, while I row.”

Bail her right willingly he did, but still the water gained steadily upon him. When they had gone far enough down the St. Lawrence to be clear of the British camp, *La Bécasse* decided to land for the night. In the morning he would repair the boat, as far as possible.

“I doubt not you are hungry, little admiral,” he said to Teddy when he woke him at dawn. “Here is no opportunity to fish, and we are yet too near the English for it to be safe to fire my gun. Never mind, we shall soon be at L’Ange Gardien, where you will see that our good friends have not forgotten us.”

The mending of the boat was not an entire success. The journey down the river took considerable time, because there had to be many pauses for repairs, and *La Bécasse*

was afraid to venture too far from shore in a leaky boat. Therefore, instead of striking boldly out into the channel, they doubled the distance by skirting every little bay, as they rounded one point after another. But the weather was fine, after the storm of the day before, and Teddy was content to be again upon his natural element. He kept a look-out for seals, and saw one at last, sunning itself on the top of a rock that would be covered when the tide came in. It slipped off into the water at the boat's approach, but not before the boy could remark that it was light brown on the back and greyish white below.

“There seems to be a large fire at L'Ange Gardien,” said *La Bécasse*, glancing over his shoulder when they had almost reached the village. “I trust the woods behind have not set the houses ablaze.”

Teddy stopped his bailing in the stern to look ahead.

“There is a lot of smoke,” said he.

La Bécasse rowed his hardest around the last projection that interfered with the view.

Alas, the whole hamlet had been destroyed ! It was but the ruins that were smoking.

“ How do you think it has happened ? ” Teddy asked, as they drew their boat up on the shore.

“ Easy to guess ! ” replied the Woodcock grimly. “ But there is one who can tell us.”

An old man was raking among the charred timbers of one of the houses, perhaps for something he had highly valued.

“ It was the Scotch savages,” he said. “ They came here to prevent us from getting in our harvest. They tried to burn our corn, but it was yet too green, so they trampled it under foot, and they cut down all our fruit trees.”

“ The fortune of war,” replied the Woodcock to Teddy’s outburst of indignation. “ The English are chagrined over their repulse at Montmorenci. They have sent out ravagers to lay waste the country. I trust they will not venture so far as Baie St. Paul. Let us be going, little admiral. Haply we may reach the next parish before them.”

CHÂTEAU RICHER, the next village, was likewise in ruins. Not even a habitant was to be seen there to tell what had occurred. Truly, the *Sauvages d'Écosse* had done their work with the national thoroughness. A sickening smell, as of charred flesh, came from the ruins of the largest house on the road. The Woodcock drew Teddy away from it to a path leading into the woods, where he hoped to find some of the refugees. They were found at last, but more woeful groups of wanderers had not yet been encountered. Scarcely a woman or a child but was lamenting the loss of a protector.

“ Was there a battle ? ” asked *La Bécasse*.

“ None ; but our curé made a stand in the great house there, along with four score

of our folk who had flown to him for protection. He had sent to the English commander a peaceful invitation to dine with him, but the house was fired like the rest."

"And the priest, what of him?"

"He came to his death, as did thirty of those who were with him."

"Weep not, little admiral! Nobody blames thee. Heard you aught of the curé of St. Joachim?" continued the Woodcock, turning once more to the habitants.

"He was here but three days before the burning, having crossed from the Isle of Orleans, where he had been kept for many days, shriving sick folk, marrying well ones, and christening babes—duties that must be done even though war rages. We would not have the innocent go straight to hell, whereunto we are told the road is but a short and steep one from the Isle of Sorcerers."

"But the curé?" asked the Woodcock impatiently. "Was he alone?"

"No; there were two young girls with him."

"A tall, dark one, like myself? A little fair hunchback?"

“The same. Marie and Marcelline, he called them. He was taking them east in his canoe. Probably they belonged to his parish.”

“No! No! But I pray they may have got safely so far as St. Joachim before the ravagers, and onwards to my wife at Baie St. Paul.”

“The fiends may have rested content with their work here and have gone no farther.”

This seemed probable to the Woodcock, as he and the little admiral pursued their onward journey. The church at Ste. Anne de Beaupré was still standing, though it had been three times set afire. It had been saved by the intervention of Ste. Anne herself. Surely even the heretic British would be impressed by this miracle and would desist from their work of destruction.

But at St. Joachim even a worse state of affairs was disclosed. A woman and her children had met their death, suffocated by the smoke in a cellar. The church had been burned, along with the people who had sought shelter in it. So said one of the few survivors visible.

“ But the curé—surely he escaped ? ” asked the Woodcock with trembling tongue. The real losses of other folk are nothing in comparison to those we dread for ourselves.

“ The priest fell like a soldier. He came of a fighting family.”

“ And those that were with him—were—was—there woman or child ? ”

“ Not at the time of the massacre. Two young girls were with him when he came home.”

“ A tall, dark girl, like myself ? A little hunchbacked one ? ”

“ The same. But where they went I know not. Every man was too busy caring for his own to take heed to what became of another’s.”

The Woodcock made a dreadful pilgrimage among the bodies of the slain, but no trace could he find of his daughter ; nor could any of the other villagers whom he questioned tell him what had become of her or of Marcelline. Had they also fallen victims to the marauders, or had a kind fortune carried them safely to Baie St. Paul ?

How to traverse the forty miles from the eastern end of the Isle of Orleans to the western end of the Isle aux Coudres in a leaky boat was a problem that would have staggered mariners of more experience, but the terrors of the river were not to be compared to the horrors of the land.

“We go ashore no more till we reach Baie St. Paul,” said the Woodcock, his face set and stern as Teddy had never seen it. What if this genial companion should lose his reason and turn upon himself as the sole representative within reach of the detested enemy that had wrought all this woe to him and his? Teddy dreaded the effect upon *La Bécasse* if he should find that his family had been harmed. No longer did the Canadian whistle and sing as he had done upon the journey westward. He rowed with a feverish energy that would brook no delay, and he paid no regard to Teddy’s anxiety about the water which was gaining such headway in the bottom of the boat. They had spent the night at St. Joachim—or at the place where it had been—and it was high noon of the follow-

ing day that they saw something unusual.

The weather was stiflingly hot. Not a breath of air was stirring even upon the great river. Teddy had begun by freckling; then his skin had peeled, but now it was browned to several shades darker than his hair. So he minded not the sunshine, nor even the glare upon the water, but his back was weary with his attempts to steer the boat with a paddle out at the stern, and at the same time to keep the water from gaining at the bottom. As he sat up to rest himself he cried :

“ Oh, look, Woodcock ! ”

The big man stopped his rowing to turn round. Away to the eastward several inverted islands were lifted up to the sky, their tree-tops meeting those of other islands exactly like themselves, but right side up and in the water. There were ships, too, standing upon their tall tapering masts, or meeting their duplicates below. *La Bécasse* stared, open-mouthed.

“ I have seen it before, but never so much—it means something,” he muttered.

“ It is no ill omen—of that I am certain,”

said hopeful little Teddy. "See, it comes from the sky."

He knew not what name to give the mirage, but, though wonderful, it appeared to him of a harmless nature, not like the deadly earthquakes of this region, nor the currents of the great river.

"'Tis a blessed sign from heaven," said the Woodcock. "All may yet be well."

His whole frame seemed to relax from the severe tension to which it had been strained. Gradually he rowed in less desperation, and at sundown he was persuaded to camp on the shore and rest while Teddy fished for their supper. But the next day his anxiety rose to fever heat again.

At Cap à la Bonne Femme, the last point to be rounded before entering the Baie St. Paul, the tide was out. The Woodcock, frantic at the sight of smoke rising from the hamlet in the valley, kept too close to the shore. The waterlogged boat ran firmly aground. Without a word he sprang out of her, splashing through water so deep in many places his little follower had to swim. Teddy

feared mightily that the miser's gold would this time drag him to the bottom, but he reached the shore in safety. An armed vessel and three transports lay at anchor in the bay. The soldiers from these were pursuing the Canadians to their retreat in the woods. Evidently considerable resistance to the invaders had been attempted. Every one of the fifty houses in the village was on fire. The church alone stood unscathed. To its door was affixed a proclamation :

“ His Excellency, piqued at the little regard paid to the manifesto of 29th June, is resolved to listen no more to sentiments of humanity towards a people blind to their best interests. He has therefore given orders to commanders of light troops and other officers to advance into the country, seize and carry off habitants and troops and to destroy as they think best. If in their anger they commit barbarities they will be but following the example set them by the Canadians and their savage allies. He gives them till the 10th of August to come to terms, and after that he will treat with utmost rigour the prisoners he holds.”

It was dated July 23, and signed by General Wolfe.

La Bécasse stood for a minute or two in front of this document, which he could not read, as if, in some mysterious way, it could tell him the fate of his family. Upon Teddy's putting his hand upon his arm he started, as if from a dream.

"Come," said the boy. "The English are beginning to return to their boats. It will work no good to you if they should find us here."

"Let them find you, little admiral—your own people. I will go on to seek for my family alone."

"And the gold? Will you take it?"

The Woodcock drew back with a gesture of disgust.

"By the saints—no! 'Tis the cause of all our misfortunes."

"Should I rejoin my people here they will take it from me."

"Let them! The curse will go with it. Alas! My Hortense, my Marie! Where are you?"

The Woodcock was like one demented.

He began to run straight in the track of the despoilers returning to their boats, laden with the household goods of the villagers. One man against many—what chance had he ?

“ *Oh, mon ami !* ”

Little Teddy caught his hand and directed his flying footsteps into the cover of the trees. *La Bécasse*, scarcely knowing what he did, consented to be led. Back into the woods the boy guided him till they were beyond earshot of all but the gun-firing of the invading force. Teddy's heart was heavy enough. Here he was deliberately allowing another opportunity for his own rescue to slip past him. But he must not think of that. His first duty was to find the family of this poor distracted friend and to rid himself of the accursed gold. He tried to persuade *La Bécasse* to lie down and rest in the woods till the English had sailed away. Then it would be safe to search thoroughly for the missing family ; but the big Canadian, though his strength was wellnigh exhausted with arduous rowing upon scanty fare, would not listen. Teddy could hardly keep up with him as he

crashed onwards, over moss-grown boulders, crossing and recrossing the brimming brook that gurgled on, regardless of the passions of mankind which were working evil so close to its banks. The little admiral was tired too, but for once the Woodcock seemed to have quite forgotten his existence. The man raced and sprang through the forest. The boy stumbled and fell.

“Woodcock! Woodcock!” he shouted, but when he picked himself up *La Bécasse* was nowhere to be seen. Teddy followed the direction in which he had been going, but ere long came to the conclusion that he was only losing himself more and more deeply in the woods.

“The fortune of war!” he sighed, as he sank upon the grass for a momentary respite. The voice of the brook alone broke the stillness. Presently there seemed to blend with it another sound—the voice of a child singing:

*“ A la claire fontaine
M'en allant promener,
J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle
Que je m'y suis baigné.”*

The boy sprang up and parted the bushes at the left of where he had been lying. A delicate-looking little hunchbacked girl was sitting calmly at the root of a large tree, picking the scarlet pigeon berries that grew all about her, as serenely as if no wars or rumours of war had ever come nigh her. Her hair was straight, pale yellow in colour and so long that it partly hid her deformity, but undoubtedly she was hunchbacked ! She stared at Teddy with soft grey eyes that reminded him of a hare, pursued by dogs, which had once taken refuge in a nook where he was hiding from his schoolfellows and which had regarded him as no more than a clump of earth.

“ Mademoiselle,”—he took off his cap and bowed low to her—“ is it that your name is Marcelline ? ”

“ Yes, sir. Have you any bread ? I am so hungry.”

“ I have that which will buy bread for you all the rest of your life. It is not the worthless paper money of the colony, but the gold of your grandfather.”

“ Ah ! What use is that to me when none here have bread to sell ? Have you not so much as a dry crust upon you, monsieur ? These berries are but small and tasteless.”

“ The Woodcock brought me here. No doubt by this time he has found his family. He will hunt for you all. Now, here is your fortune. I have borne it upon my person these many long weeks.”

“ Bear it yet awhile longer, I pray you. Nay ! Unwind it not ! ” The boy had thrown off his shabby jacket and was beginning to loosen the ends of the scarf. “ How could I bind that about myself, or carry it unseen ? ”

“ We can bury the gold, then, near this place,” said Teddy.

“ But we are not like to stay here. The houses of the village are all burned. So soon as the English go onwards we shall return to Isle aux Coudres, the happy spot where I was born. Saint Joseph approved not of our leaving it. That is why all this trouble has befallen us. Alas ! My poor grandfather ! ”

She buried her face in her hands and her

fair hair fell like a veil over her fingers.

“Your grandfather stayed upon the island ——” began Teddy, but he went no farther. It seemed scarcely a courteous reminder to give to this lonely weeping orphan. He wished devoutly that she would relieve him of her abominable gold and leave him free to run to the English. They must have nearly all gone back to their boats by this time. A last chance would soon be gone. The firing of shots was growing more distant and there were longer pauses between.

“Marie Bonneau will guard this treasure for you, Marcelline. Where is she?”

“That I know not.”

“Was it not she who brought you here?”

“No! No! When those dreadful *sauvages d’Ecosse* landed to destroy the village, one of them sprang at me and dragged me away here.”

“To a place of safety. That was kind of him.”

“Think you that he meant to be kind?”

The young girl opened her eyes in amazement.

“Of a surety. Even the savage of Scotland has a heart.”

“They looked so fierce and strange with their petticoats and their bare knees—ah, where is Marie?”

“I will go to find her for you.”

Teddy started off in haste. There might yet be time to rid himself of the gold and then make his escape to the English vessels. The Woodcock had abandoned him. Once freed from the charge of the treasure, he would be free indeed!

TEDDY did not stop to consider how he should be able to identify a girl he had never seen in his life. His first step was to decide where he was most likely to find any of the women or children. Their husbands and fathers would still be at the front, giving back shot for shot to the retiring victors. He felt sure of that, but where were the defenceless ones hidden? He made a tour of inspection in one direction after another. Ah! There at last was the bright-coloured dress of a woman glimmering through the trees. Teddy dashed towards her. Yes, she knew the Bonneau family. They were on the hillside yonder. The boy ran on. The next woman he came to was Hortense, the distressed mother of the twelve. Like a brooding hen, she was trying to shelter her

chickens under her wings, though surely no shot from ship or shore could reach so far inland.

“Where is Marie?” demanded Master Rudell.

Madame Bonneau was startled at the sudden appearance of the small boy.

“The little admiral! Good! My husband has but now gone to search the woods for you. He pictured you lost in them, dying of starvation, poor child!”

“What nonsense!” exclaimed the midshipman, rising to his dignity. “I can assure you, madame, I am now an excellent woodsman. But your daughter, Mademoiselle Marie, what of her?”

“Ah me! I know not where she is. I had all I could do to look after the little ones. Marie had Marcelline to save from the Scotch savages.”

“Both girls returned to you safely from St. Joachim?”

“Yes. Praise to the saints! Now that my husband is also with us we need fear no further alarms. He will care for us all.”

“That is good news, madame.”

“It is, though we have lost everything. But now we have no more to lose!”

“Bon jour, madame,” said Teddy hastily. He did not like to have the cause of the losing dwelt upon. “I go to seek out Marie, then to rejoin my friends, the English. I deeply regret that they have seen fit to punish innocent habitants like yourself so severely, but it is the fortune of war. Present my compliments to *La Bécasse*. I may not see him again.”

Teddy made this long speech with such an air that Madame Bonneau stared after him much impressed.

“The son of an admiral without a doubt!”

The boy maintained his dignified gait till he was out of her sight. Then he took to leaping and scrambling after the manner of any other boy who saw freedom almost within his grasp. From the vantage ground behind rock or tree he peered at the parties of women and children scattered thickly along that wooded hillside, but he saw nobody that

in the least suggested the face or the height of the Woodcock among these rather under-sized females. Not any of them could be Marie. He had probably made another mistake in not handing the gold over to Hortense ; but she had seemed as helpless in the matter of taking care of it as Marcelline herself—with all those children hanging to her. No, he must persist till he found the right person.

He came down at length into the valley, near the bank of the same brook at whose side he had found Marcelline. There he became eyewitness to an unexpected scene. Upon a high, bare stone, fairly out in the middle of the rushing water, was seated a young man in the uniform of the 78th Highlanders. He was not more than nineteen years of age, had good features, curly, reddish hair, and a complexion sunburned to a shade deeper than Teddy's own. Apparently he was wounded. His jacket was off, lying beside him, and his shirt-sleeve had been ripped open to the shoulder. A Canadian maid was washing the blood from a wound

in the upper part of his left arm. Two wounds, Teddy remarked. The bullet must have gone clean through. He watched the pair for some minutes before resolving to make his presence known. That girl was the feminine counterpart of the Woodcock. Without a doubt she was Marie. But what did she mean by caring for an enemy, instead of looking after her own charge, Marcelline? There was her mother, too, sore beset with the charge of the eleven! This young man was big enough to attend to himself. His wound was not dangerous, as anyone could see, and yet there he sat, seemingly more than content. He followed every movement of his comely nurse with eyes full of respectful adoration. Her heart may have been fluttering also, for in truth he was a very presentable young Scot, but she modestly refrained from returning his glances, and worked away at the arm composedly enough. Again and again she dipped into the stream the white linen kerchief she had taken from her own neck and was now using to stanch the flow of blood. What amused young Teddy was

that all the while the "Scotch savage" was talking to her in the Gaelic, while she replied in French, if she replied at all. It was evident that neither of them understood a word that the other said.

The midshipman began to make a cautious descent, but the loosely-heaped rocks slid away from his feet and he landed precipitately at the brook-side. The Highlander sprang across and seized him by the collar with his sound right arm.

"Oh, Marie Bonneau!" cried the boy. "I am the friend of *La Bécasse*, thy father. All this way have we come in search of thee and of Marcelline."

"*Bien!*" said the girl. She too sprang across and loosened the grip of the big man's fingers with her own two hands. Both of hers he tried to imprison in his, but she pointed to his wounded arm and waved him imperiously to his seat again. Then to Teddy she said:

"You are surprised to see me succouring one of the enemy? It was he who ran forward and carried Marcelline out of harm's

way. She is quite near us, a little farther up this same stream. I thought she might turn faint at the sight of blood—she often does—and so I made this man come down here to be tied up. He was shot accidentally by his own comrades while helping us. So you see I could do no less than help him. Now tell me of my dear father.”

“ He is no doubt out there with the others, firing at the English. ’Tis a long and weary trail we have had seeking you. So soon as you get rid of this wounded soldier I will deliver up to you the scarf that I wear about my waist. It contains the inheritance of Marcelline. No! No! Look not at it now. Should this man discover that I have aught of value upon me he might not let me give it to you.”

The stalwart Highlandman stirred restlessly. He could not know the other two were talking about him, but he did not like being shut out of the conversation. Teddy understood no Gaelic, but he tried the patient with English :

“ Now that your wound is dressed, hasten

after your comrades, else you may be left behind."

"I am no' carin'. Are ye one o' us?"

The young fellow drew the boy towards him and curiously examined the sole remaining button upon his coat.

"I am an officer of the British Navy," said Teddy, withdrawing himself from this bold private, who made him a military salute, though a smile lurked about the corners of his handsome mouth.

"Run yersel', sir, or 'tis you will be left."

"I may follow you, but first——"

"I am not carin', I tell you, if I go or not. This burnin' the hooses owre the heads o' women and weans is no' to my taste."

"You must be a raw recruit, unused to the ways of warfare."

The Highlandman laughed. "I canna pretend to be a veteran, like yersel', sir."

"You would be a deserter, eh?"

"A prisoner, please, your honour. I am held in bondage by the lassie here. Will ye no' be tellin' her so for me?"

“Mademoiselle Marie!” Teddy made her a conventional bow. “This man claims that you are holding him captive, that you will not let him return to his regiment.”

“Say to monsieur that I have done all that I can for his arm now. He can go when he will. We have no food for ourselves, much less for a captive.”

“Marie says to tell you that they have no food, even for themselves, much less to feed a great hulking fool like you.”

“But I can shoot, I can fish, I can help to feed them all.”

This being translated to Marie, she said :

“We cannot take help from our enemies,” and Teddy interpreted this :

“She says she would rather starve than be indebted to the foes of her country for a single mouthful.”

“Cruel Mary!” sighed the soldier. But the girl’s glances were not so unkind as her speech, translated by this young intruder.

“Tell her I am no enemy whateffer, that I love her, ye wee deevil.”

“My good man, I’ll have you arrested——”

“ That you will not. Tell her I lofe her, I lofe her, lofe her, that my heart will be bleedin’ worrse than my arm, at the partin’ wi’ her, that I will stay here to take care of her and the little hunchback, her sister——”

“ She is not her sister ! ”

“ Tell her, ye imp o’ Sawtan ! My name it iss Macfarlane, and it will be hers too, so soon as the priest can wed us. I loved her so soon as I saw her trying to carry the puir wee crutchie. I ran to her. She wass my goal, my cushie-doo, and the blessed bullets they laid me at her feet.”

“ Are they all out of you yet ? ”

Teddy’s matter-of-fact question roused the other’s wrath to a white heat.

“ They stayed in—not one of them, not as one will be staying in you this minute if you do not as I am tellin’ ye.”

“ The name of this savage is Macfarlane,” said Teddy to Marie. She was now tying up the soldier’s arm with a bandage made from his shirt sleeve. The little admiral could credit the tales of her cleverness told by her father, when he saw how handily she

did it. She pretended to be paying no attention to anything else, but could not easily avoid the ardent glances of this impetuous wooer, though Teddy's translation could hardly be called alluring.

"He wishes you to know that for your sake he is even willing to become a deserter, a scorn and a reproach to his whole regiment, a disgrace to his nation."

The girl tossed her head in derision.

"I should despise such a one."

"She bids me tell you she hates you," said Teddy, in a judicial tone. The nice distinctions of the French speech, like the nice distinctions of lovers' phrases were quite beyond his comprehension.

"It iss a lie!" cried Macfarlane. "I will neffer be hearing that from hersell. Tell her to say, 'Hector, I lofe you.'"

"He wants you to say 'Hector, I love you,' but that would be an untruth, would it not, Marie? You had never seen him an hour ago. You are but sorry for a wounded man, be he British or blackamoor."

"Of course, that is all," said Marie with a

blush which Teddy never noticed. The Scot was keener. He paid no attention to the boy's stilted response :

“ Being kind of heart, she is glad to help any wounded dog by the roadside——”

“ Ah, Mary ! ” sighed Hector.

She had helped him on with his coat and he had thrown his good arm round her waist—— A bullet from the bushes whizzed past the side of his head ! *La Bécasse* burst through the undergrowth, springing wrathfully towards this loved daughter of his, whom he saw actually struggling in the arms of the enemy. She pushed Hector from her with an affrighted face and ran to her father, uttering a cry of joy.

Macfarlane was uncertain how many of the French might be surrounding him. He grasped Teddy's hand and dragged him along with him up the bank at the opposite side of the brook. The boy tried to free himself to explain that the newcomer was a friend to Mary, and no enemy of his own, but the soldier held him tightly. Teddy sprawled flat, through sheer inability to keep up the

pace at which his captor was going. Macfarlane picked him up under his right arm and so kept on running with him—all the way back to the shore. If this was really an English boy, he should be safely returned to his friends.

Teddy cried, "Stop! Stop!" but his kidnapper only laughed.

Down on the beach they overtook the last of the returning braves, a party of Highlandmen who had been at their old trade—cattle-stealing. The cows and the sheep of the habitants were being driven into the water as far as they would go and then hauled aboard the transports.

"I have here a bellowing young calf," said Macfarlane, whom the others hailed with glee. None of them could speak English, so despite his kicking and protesting, Teddy was carried aboard the sloop of war which was just making ready to sail away. The boy resolved to declare himself immediately to the officer in command of the expedition. This was Captain Goreham, who was somewhat surprised to be so familiarly addressed

by a small boy in very shabby clothing, upon his own deck.

“What impudence is this?” he asked crossly. The Baie St. Paul raid had taken more time than he expected or desired. Now he was in haste to be off and the sailors appeared to be unaccountably slow in their preparations. “Who are you?”

“I am an officer of the navy.”

Captain Goreham laughed at that statement, even as the Chevalier de Lévis had done. “Whatever you are, or have been, you are now our prisoner. Take him away, Macfarlane.”

“I was thinkin’ he might be an English boy, sir, or I would not be bringin’ him aboard. He wass no use as a prisoner, bein’ over-small to be exchanged for a full-sized one of our own.”

“If he is English, how did he get among the Canadians at this port?”

Teddy spoke for himself.

“I was taken there by a peaceful habitant who went home to look after his family.”

“Have a care, my little man. Some of

your peaceful habitants have been distressing our shipping very considerably. For that we were ordered to make a raid upon their peaceful village, whereunto two hundred men in arms opposed our landing. We have beaten them back—as you see—and are now on our way to chastise the peaceful habitants of Malbaie. See to the stripling, Macfarlane.”

“He shall not touch me,” cried Teddy passionately. “I am the son of Admiral Rudell. I was captured by the Canadians upon the Isle aux Coudres two months ago.”

“Some such affair did happen, I have heard,” said Captain Goreham, “as you did also, you clever little liar, but the boy and his companions got safely back to the frigate. You are a deserter, a cabin boy most likely, and deserve to be put in irons.”

Teddy did not reply. He realized that his close-cropped head, his way-worn jacket and home-made round cap carried little suggestion of a well-dressed midshipman, but his attention was suddenly called in another direction.

He caught sight of a man upon the shore,

making his way to the water's edge. He had been dodging from boulder to boulder, but now came boldly out into the open. It was undoubtedly the Woodcock looking for him !

THE sight of his friend upon the beach made Teddy's heart throb with excitement. His eyes lit up in eagerness as he followed the movements of *La Bécasse*. Captain Goreham had noticed the change of expression in the boy's face, but he was hardly prepared for the request: "I desire to be set ashore immediately."

"The devil you do!"

The impertinence of the demand was so appalling that the Captain laughed.

"Yes, sir. It is not yet too late, but hurry! The anchor will be raised directly. That friend of mine upon the beach yonder has come to seek for something which belongs to him and which I have here upon my person. Just so soon as I have delivered it up to him I shall gladly return to you to be taken to my father."

Captain Goreham looked towards the land. Sure enough there was a man there, leaping about among the rocks.

“Quick, men!” he shouted instantly. “Fire upon that rascal. He is up to no good.”

A dozen muskets blazed away. Teddy danced up and down upon the deck in his anxiety. Once again his impulsive speech had brought trouble. Had he caused the death of his friend? When the smoke of the volley cleared away, the Woodcock rose, unhurt, from behind a sheltering boulder. He shook his fist at the departing vessel and then made a backward dash for the bushes, running not in a straight line but zig-zag, in a fashion confusing to the aim of the rangers on the sloop. When Teddy saw him reach the safety of the woods, he waved his cap in the air and shouted a shrill “Hurrah!”

A cuff on the ear brought him to his senses.

“This is the boy who pretends to be a captured midshipman off our fleet,” said Captain Goreham. “He is at least a spy and shall be hanged as such before we set sail.”

It was amazing to Teddy when he thought of it afterwards, but the actual hearing that he was to be hanged gave him no such qualms of terror as he had felt during the July battle. He was still full of exhilaration over the Woodcock's escape, and it would take much to daunt him. It would be curious indeed if these British soldiers should dare to hang the son of one of their own admirals. Even the gold he carried might be safer with himself than with *La Bécasse*, whose reckless daring made him liable to be shot at any time. But the boy's spirits were doomed to a speedy dampening. The motion about his being a spy having carried, it was ordered that he be searched for treasonable papers. Naturally, the first thing that Hector Macfarlane did was to unwind the long scarf and take it to Captain Goreham, who was amazed at the value of its contents. Teddy followed the treasure he had borne so long. There were tears in his eyes as he appealed to the commanding officer :

“ You must not rob me of the gold, sir. It does not belong to me.”

“ You are now speaking the truth. The coins belong to the English Government, which will probably distribute them among my men as prize money, in compensation for the disagreeable work upon which they have been sent of late.”

“ You have no right—the gold was given to me in trust——”

“ I deny it not. This treasure convinces me more than ever that you were upon some secret mission from the French authorities, you and your Canadian ally yonder. Small blame to him for attempting your rescue, but he was too late, the fine fellow! We shall not hang you—oh no! We shall keep you safe as a pigeon till we get to Point Levis and have opportunity to inquire into your antecedents. My own impression is that the man we shot at on shore is the chief sinner. He must have tied his scarf about you as being the one less likely than himself to be suspected of having the money. So weep not, Master Impudence! You shall not be slain.”

“ I am not weeping. I have already faced death in more than one form. It will be well

for yourself if you do me no harm. Bring me before the English General—before my own father——”

“No easy matter,” said Goreham with a light laugh. “Take the chattering babe away from here, Macfarlane, and put the scarf just as it is into my strong-box. You know where I keep the key.”

Teddy wrestled desperately, but again Hector was too strong for him. He carried the boy below and laid him, gently enough, in his own bunk. There, completely worn out with physical and mental exertion, the young midshipman forgot his troubles in a sound sleep. He had caught the Woodcock’s trick of waking easily, and some time during the night that followed he heard a loud sigh beside him.

“Hector Macfarlane!” whispered the boy.

“What’s that?”

“It was ill done of you to steal the gold from Marie’s little friend.”

“I stole it not. ’Twass yoursell. If I had but kent it wass Mary’s——”

“It is not hers, but she would have got

her share of it, I am sure. Let us go up on deck, out of this vile-smelling place, and I will tell you the whole story."

"Keep quiet, then, and dinna rouse the whole ship's company."

Teddy crept cautiously upwards after the Highlandman. The sloop was anchored just as it had been when he went below. Were they still off Baie St. Paul? He might yet gain the shore, find the Woodcock—ah, but where was the gold? No wonder he had slept soundly delivered at last from that weary load.

"Where are we?" he asked, as he snuggled close to Macfarlane, seated on the deck. It was now the end of August and the night was chilly. The stars seemed to shine with a frosty glitter, and the nothern lights, shimmering to the horizon, already gave warning that winter was hurrying on its way to that inclement region. Teddy wondered if he would ever again sit by a warm fireside. Macfarlane put his arm about the shivering boy in a friendly fashion.

"It iss off the Iley Cowder that we are."

“ Isle aux Coudres, you mean.”

“ Juist that. I thought they were calling it Iley because of the ile of the porpoises they make on it. We have to put all our booty ashore here the morn and it iss glad some of our sick folk camping on this island will be to get the fresh meat we bring.”

“ And after that ? ”

“ After that we will be makin’ a call upon the south shore o’ this big firth to punish some o’ the villains over there.”

“ Villains ? What have they done ? They but protect their homes and their families. You would do the same yourself.”

“ Ay, that would I. Tell me about the bonny Mary.”

Teddy’s tongue had had a long rest from English speech. His words flowed forth like a torrent there at midnight upon the deserted deck. He told Hector all about the ride round the Isle aux Coudres and how he and his companions had been captured.

“ The gold is the inheritance of the little hunchback, the one you carried yourself beyond the fire of your mates. She is like

one of the Woodcock's own family. Marie has always loved her like a sister."

"And I will always be loving Mary, though not like a sister."

"You must get the scarf back for me, Hector. I can take it to her to-morrow. It would be easy to row across to the mainland from here in a small boat."

"She would gie me the back o' her hand, if I wass a deserter. Ye said so yoursel."

"It is not needful for you to come with me. I can go alone, if you will but get me the scarf and help me to escape. If I start at dawn I can get over there and back again before you are ready to set sail for the south shore. I have no wish to stay longer with the Canadians, once my trust is fulfilled. Please get the gold for me, sergeant."

Hector was not yet raised from the ranks, but he hoped soon to be, and Teddy's premonitory title, given in that wheedling tone, was not without its effect.

"We'll see—we'll see—the morn. It isna locked up yet. I couldna find the key o' the strong-box."

“ Where is the gold, then ? ”

“ Juist where you had it ! ”

The young Highlandman took the boy's fingers and let him feel the meshes of the scarf about his own waist.

Teddy breathed a sigh of relief. So long as it was not locked up there was always a chance of getting away with it.

“ You are an honest man, Hector ! ”

“ I am that—far owre honest to care about this robbing o' puir folk we'se bent upon. Wad I had kent what made you so heavy when I wass runnin' wi' ye ! I thought it wass a coat o' mail ye had on.”

“ You gave no heed, even when I kicked and thumped you.”

“ Ye did that. Losh ! Gosh ! Ye caught me once on the sair arm. But you must sleep now, laddie.”

Teddy had no intention of sleeping more that night, but when Hector led him below again, and tucked him up in the bunk he went off immediately, perhaps through a feeling of security that he had to a certain extent won Macfarlane over to the cause of

Marcelline. Hector was indeed much impressed by the boy's story. As he looked down at the childish face in the grey light of the dawn, he resolved not to waken him. So small a mite must not be allowed to run any more risks ashore. If it were possible he would like to take the scarf back himself to the father of Mary and perhaps see the bonny lassie herself—Heigh ho !

Before Teddy woke, the sloop and the transports had all lifted anchor and were miles away from the Isle aux Coudres. They were heading for Malbaie, the next parish east of Les Eboulements, where another settlement had to be raided. Hector made the most of his wounded shoulder and was put upon sentry duty, instead of being obliged to land. Teddy magnanimously accepted the big Highlandman's apology for not having wakened him.

“ Ye see where we are now, and where we will be the morn,” he said.

“ Will the ships not go back to Isle aux Coudres to deposit their plunder from this place ? ”

“ I doot if it will be worth their while. There are no’ many folk hereabouts, though it seems a fine country, quite like the Hielan’s where I come frae. Would it no’ be grand, think ye, to have a bit land on ane o’ thae slopes—wi’ Mary to keep the hoose ? ”

“ Oh, I dare say. The gold of the hunch-back could buy such a place and you would not mind having herself to live with you ? ”

“ Not a mite, if Marie wanted it. We must get the money to her some way.”

No immediate way appeared. From Malbaie, the expedition sailed across the great river to the mouth of the Rivière Ouelle, where an imposing manor house went up in flames. Teddy had no desire to land, even had he been permitted. He would fain shut his eyes to the firing of St. Roch and Ste. Anne de la Pocatière, having seen too many burning villages upon the northern shore to care to look at others upon the southern.

The undertaking was usually a simple affair to Goreham’s rangers and Highlanders. There would be an attempt at resistance, where the Canadian militia were at home,

gathering in their scanty harvest. These men had been creeping out to work after dark when they could hope to escape detection by English marauders from the Isle aux Coudres. They had firearms, which none knew better than themselves how to use, but the enemy's numbers were always overpowering. In every case the habitants were driven back and many of them were slain.

How long would it take them to learn the futility of trying to interfere in this quarrel between two European nations for the possession of their country? They might rail as they chose at the injustice of the mother country; not one of them would consent to remain neutral while her battles were being fought.

"It is a wicked business, this war," Teddy thought, but he was still a small boy and a tender-hearted one. His quick fancy drew pictures of the long years it had taken these habitants to bring their acres, few at best, under some sort of cultivation. What must their feelings be now to see their hard-won crops trampled under foot or burned, their

trees cut down just as they were beginning to bear fruit, their sheep and cattle carried off to feed the invaders, even their household goods taken away before their eyes. The boy could not understand why it was necessary for a civilized nation to commit such ravages, and Goreham was not the man to inform him.

The Captain had been so far won over by Hector Macfarlane's belief in the truth of the small boy's story that he had agreed to let him have the freedom of the vessel, but he must not try to set foot ashore.

"If he should really prove to be young Rudell," said Goreham, "it must not be in his power to tell his father that we abused him, but as for giving him back his gold-laden scarf and letting him go free—that is another matter. Admiral Rudell would have every cause to blame us if we did anything of the sort. On the other hand if he is really a spy, as I am still inclined to think, the money is so much into the pockets of all of us. So take good care, Macfarlane, that the lad escapes not."

There was only one way in which Hector would be willing to accept any portion of the gold, and that was as a wedding gift to "Mary" from Marcelline, and upon that subject he could not enter with his commander. He sought to console his young prisoner, and in return sought consolation for himself in hearing over again the story of the finding of the treasure upon the Isle aux Coudres, and all that Teddy had to tell about his adventures with the Woodcock, Mary's father. Hector talked of the girl, even in his sleep, to Teddy's great disgust, but he was wise enough to see that it was only upon Marie's account that the young man would ever agree to letting him have the gold again.

If only they would again cast anchor off the Isle aux Coudres, he might have another chance to communicate with the north shore, but Captain Goreham sent the transports to the depot alone, to unload the plunder from the south shore. He himself in the sloop of war proceeded directly up the river to Point Levis, there to await further orders.

FROM the opposite shore of the St. Lawrence, Teddy at last looked across at Quebec, the far-famed, but what he chiefly saw was a heap of smoking ruins. For many days past the city had been steadily bombarded from the English batteries now stationed at Point Lévis.

“There is nothing left for us to take,” said the midshipman to Hector Macfarlane, who had been commanded to keep a watchful eye upon this young prisoner until the return of Captain Goreham from head-quarters.

“General Wolfe will be wanting the site to plant a nice wee English village upon.”

“I thought, when soldiers took a city they always climbed the walls, instead of battering it to bits from a distance, like this.”

“That’s how you will be doing it, nae

doot," replied the Highlandman with a sleepy yawn. The summer had been a very rainy one, but now the sun seemed trying to make up for lost time. For some reason unknown to him, the bombardment had ceased from Point Lévis and Hector saw a chance for making up lost time himself, in the matter of rest. He threw off his thick red jacket, and loosened the ends of the habitant scarf which he was still wearing, because he had not liked to confess to Goreham that he had not yet been able to find the key of the strong-box. He sat down on the deck, with his back against a coil of rope, prepared to take it easy, since he could watch Teddy as well sitting as standing. The boy would never go away from him so long as he had his treasure, and it was terribly hot weather they had in this cursed Canada !

Teddy was tired too, waiting for the next turn of fortune's wheel, but there was no use trying to hasten its revolutions. He wished he too could fall asleep, as Hector was doing, now that there was a lull in the bombardment which had kept them both

awake the night before. It was galling indeed to be detained aboard while all the rangers and Highlanders, except one, had gone ashore, in high good humour over the success of their marauding expedition. It suddenly came to the idle boy, leaning over the rail of the vessel—the reason for the cessation of the firing upon the town from Point Lévis. English men of war had begun to pass up the river, above Quebec! Yes, there was one already safely past the guns of the citadel, and there were others farther up the river, he could see. What if the *Diana* had gone by whilst he was below! He might have hailed her had he only known, these other vessels seemed to pass so near. But now he should only waken Hector and be sent below did he try any such pranks. He must bide his time till Goreham came back. It could not be long now till he was safe again with his own people.

All sorts of craft were flying about the wide harbour, evidently taking advantage of the suspension of hostilities on the part of the British. One of these, bolder or more

curious than the rest, came over towards the sloop of war anchored off Point Lévis. There was only one person in the jaunty little boat, an old man, as Teddy made out when it came nearer. Where had he seen that red tasselled cap, that weather-beaten face before? At Baie St. Paul? No. At L'Ange Gardien? No. Now he remembered. It was François, the pilot!

That staunch navigator had no lack of inquisitiveness in his composition. He sailed close past the newly-arrived sloop of war in the hope of ascertaining where it had been and where it was going next. To his surprise and delight he was joyfully hailed from her stern.

“François! Oh, François!”

“The little admiral, as I live!” he cried, and immediately put about to come under the lee of the big vessel. “So you have not been eaten by bears or savages!”

“No, but I am a prisoner here until such time as Captain Goreham sees fit to let me go ashore to seek my father.”

“Your father is not ashore, little admiral,

as you might well know. The *Diana* has gone past this point, up the river, as far as Cap Rouge, perhaps, to scare our people into thinking a landing is to be made up there—as if that were possible! They merely mean to keep our men busy on the bank, following their movements up and down.”

“Yes! Yes! But my father—is he well?”

“Well, but worried about thee, scoundrel that thou art. Where hast thou been all summer?”

“’Tis too long a story to tell you now. I am here at last in time to see the fall of Quebec. That is the main thing.”

“Huh! Mr. Wolfe cannot get in now before the snow flies. The winter will be our saviour. Is not Captain Goreham going to deliver you up to your father, Master Rudell?”

“I have not inquired of Captain Goreham what his intentions are regarding me.”

“You have the spirit of a Frenchman, nay, even of a Canadian, my child. I like not to see an officer of the regular British

navy remain longer upon this mongrel vessel."

"Captain Goreham will not believe that I am a midshipman."

"True, your uniform is passé, your hair cut short, and as for your cap—but pardon, Monsieur! You have an air that any but a dull clod of an English pirate could see was the mark of one accustomed to authority. You have but to command me and I will sail you anywhere you wish to go. Shall it be up the river to the *Diana*?"

"I took no oath to Captain Goreham about not escaping, should opportunity occur. Indeed, I long to see my father—but—but—I should like first to know what has become of *La Bécasse*."

"*Dominique Bonneau, dit la Bécasse*? I can tell you that readily for I know the man well. He is from Isle aux Coudres. I landed him and his whole family over yonder at the mouth of the St. Charles, yesterday."

"Here? At Quebec?"

"Where else? There was no house to shelter them, nor anything for them to live

upon at Baie St. Paul. They could not return to the Coudres because the British have an hospital and a depot for supplies upon that island."

"You say the whole Bonneau family is across there now?"

"I trust there are no more. I counted twenty persons, when I was weak enough to offer them passage to the land in my boat, seeing that the schooner they had come up in drew too much water to approach near to the shore. It took me half a dozen trips, back and forth, though they had no goods nor chattels—nothing but the clothes upon their backs, and they were thin enough, poor souls!"

"Are you sure they were all the family of *La Bécasse*? Was there among them a tall, dark girl, like the Woodcock, and a little fair one, hunchbacked?"

"To those I can swear, for the Woodcock carried the hunchback ashore himself. The tall girl had a child clinging to each of her arms and another upon her back."

"That would be Marie," cried Teddy

joyfully. "Thank Heaven they are safe!"

"About their safety I would not be so sure, little admiral, since they are close to Quebec, where the fighting is likely to be. I believe they meant to take refuge in or near the General Hospital; Madame Bonneau has a sister there, who is a nun. 'Twould be an easy matter for me to sail you across, if you have a mind to see them all. After that I could take you to the *Diana*. It would be less dangerous for me to sail up the river towards Cap Rouge after nightfall, when the ships of your fleet will have come to anchor and the guns of the citadel have also ceased firing, since no more will try sailing upwards in the dark. We could creep close along by the Quebec side of the river and I could row this boat if the wind fails us."

"And I could help you!" cried Teddy eagerly.

"It would be your place to steer, and also to challenge in English the sentry, or whatever you call him, on the *Diana*, when we came near."

“Alas! There is a big sentry here who has me in charge. He will never let me go off sailing with you, François.”

“How is it that you are talking with me?”

“Because he’s asleep, round the corner, out of sight of me, on this deck.”

“Huh! A pretty sentry!”

“He is a friend—he trusts me—but I ought to go off with you, François. It is not a matter of pleasure, but of business. George would tell you about the gold of Père Grison, which we found on the Coudres?”

“He did. I knew the old miser well, but dreamt not that his savings were so considerable.”

“Every coin of his gold is now aboard this vessel.”

François gave a whistle of astonishment.

“His granddaughter will see none of it.”

“She shall, if I can possibly get hold of it again.”

“Well! You say your guard is asleep——”

“Yes, but he is wearing the gold in the

Woodcock's scarf, bound round about his waist—— Ah! Wait a minute!"

He remembered the loosened ends! Teddy tip-toed round to where Hector lay—on his side, his bare knees crossed in the sun, his kilt rumped about him carelessly. He had nothing else on but his shirt. The curly head, resting on his arm, was shaded by the coil of rope against which he had been leaning. Poor fellow! It would be a pity to waken him from so sound a sleep, so much needed after the many nights on duty that he had had down the river. He must have been very hot indeed when he took off the scarf entirely—but where had he put it? Teddy crept nearer. He lifted Hector's red coat, which was lying on top of the rope. Nestling in the centre of the coil was the scarf of the Woodcock! The boy could hardly keep from letting out a whoop of joy. Once this cursed gold was placed in the hands of François, he would deliver it over to Marcelline, and Captain Goreham or Macfarlane might rage at him as they pleased. Admiral Rudell would be near enough to protect his son.

“François! Oh, François! Here is all of the gold! You will take it across to relieve the Bonneau family.”

“Not without you, my little admiral! Did the Woodcock not tell you the gold was accursed?”

“Yes! But I am not afraid. I will come—but—but—there is not an inch of rope anywhere about except that my guard’s lying near. However can I get down to you.”

“You’re small enough to creep out a porthole.”

“I am not—and besides—there are men down there.”

“Use the scarf as a rope, then. Slide down to my boat on it. I’ll catch you if it is not long enough.”

François, be it understood, was not anxious to be guilty of taking this gold away from the English ship. He had made friends among these enemies of his country and wished to keep in their good graces. This he could do by restoring the son of one of their admirals, but not by robbing them

of what was no doubt considered treasure trove. If Teddy used the scarf to slide down to his boat, he could not bring it away with him, for who would unfasten it from the sloop of war?

Let the sentry find it hanging over the stern when he woke up.

But Teddy's trembling little fingers could not tie the fringed ends tightly enough to the railing of the sloop. As he lowered himself by it, the scarf came away with him, landing him in the arms of François with such unexpected force that the good man caught a crab over the seat of his shallop.

"The saints preserve us!" he exclaimed. "You came so quick I nearly let you drop into the water. Here! Crawl under this spare sail. One of your inquisitive Englishmen may stick his head out of a porthole."

When he found that he had both boy and gold, he added, cheerfully:

"The fortune of war!" It had been none of his doings.

As the shallop shot away from the side of the war vessel, like a hound from its

leash, a tall man, curly-headed, leaned over the bulwark. The next minute a bullet lodged in the mast of the pilot's boat.

"Your guard is awake, little admiral," said François. "Faith! He'll have to whistle for you in a breeze like this. Only a cannon could catch us now."

The wind carried the adventurous little craft safely across to the mouth of the St. Charles River, at the right of the Quebec promontory. The tide was full, so that it was able to proceed until stopped by a boom, not far from the General Hospital. The pilot was known and therefore no objections were raised to his mooring his boat beside the barrier.

"We must get away from here before the tide goes out again," he said. "That is the General Hospital farther along this bank, the large stone building, little admiral. You cannot miss the way to it."

Teddy indeed found his way there without difficulty. The hospital was crowded with refugees of every rank. To one of the overworked sisters he made his inquiry.

“The family of Dominique Bonneau is not here—no,” she replied—none “save the little hunchback, who is not his own.”

“She is the one I want to see,” said Teddy. “I have something to give her, something which belongs to her.”

“That is good news, for she has little enough, poor child! Come this way and go out of that door into the courtyard. There you will find her. I must run elsewhere.”

Marcelline was sunning herself in the garden, seated on a bench against the wall of the convent-hospital. She expressed no surprise at Teddy’s sudden appearance.

“I knew not who you were that day in the woods,” she said simply, “but now *La Bécasse* has told us all about the little admiral and what a brave, good friend he has been.”

“The men of our service,” said Teddy, bridling a bit, “are taught to endure hardship without complaint. We are also bound in honour to deliver up that which belongs not to us.”

He laid the scarf containing the gold in her lap.

“That is true. The Woodcock said you would surely deliver up to me the fortune of my grandfather when you had opportunity. I thank you, Monsieur, for coming with it.”

She fingered the meshes and abstracted a coin or two.

“So many! So many! Now I shall be able to care for those who have cared—oh, so kindly—for me?”

“Why is Marie not here with you?”

“She had to go with the others to an Indian village, six miles back from here. She and her mother must keep out of sight, lest they be turned into horses.”

“Horses?”

“Yes, sir. Such a number of those friends of man have been killed and eaten, it is now the women and the children who have to haul the cart loads of provisions into the camp and the town. François, the pilot, who knows all things, says that M. Bigot has a goodly store of cattle hidden away somewhere, and that there was no need for a single horse to be killed, but surely the soldiers from France would not have been

driven to eat horse flesh had there been aught else for them. He knows too much, that François."

"He at least is a good friend," said Teddy. "He brought me here to deliver up to you your inheritance, Marcelline. I must go back to him now, and he will take me to my father. Adieu!"

GLAD to be freed at last from the unlucky encumbrance, the boy hastened with a light step and a lighter heart back to the barrier where François was waiting for him. Nothing now stood between him and a joyful reunion with his father. He did not care a straw about the outcome of Captain Goreham's wrath, nor how it might wreak itself upon the careless Hector Macfarlane who had let him slip away. François should have the honour of taking him straight to the *Diana*.

Keeping clear of the road that led from the General Hospital to the city gate, a mile distant, Teddy tried a short cut, that proved to be a long cut and brought him out at the St. Charles River bank—not at the end of the boom, as he expected, but

close to the entrance to the bridge of boats which spanned the stream at the beginning of the French camp. Two men in the uniform of the colony crossing from the same caught sight of the little admiral before he could change his route. Teddy's heart sank within him as he recognized the weirdly displaced eye of the one, the pock-marked face of the other. They were Pierre and Antoine!

They had not seen him since he and the Woodcock had left them in the lurch on the Isle of Orleans. Would they remember him? His taking to his heels attracted their attention, and they followed swiftly. The ground was rough and the men knew it better than the boy. They quickly gained upon him, and laid hold of him when within a stone's throw of the barrier on the other side of which the sail of François was bobbing up and down with the ebbing tide.

"Let me go!" screamed Teddy. Pierre was carefully feeling his waist to discover if the gold were yet around it. "If I am a prisoner of war I demand the treatment of one."

“ You are not a prisoner of war, but our prisoner,” Antoine replied. “ You shall tell us what you have done with the gold, which is our property.”

“ The gold which you call yours is neither yours nor mine. It is now in the hands of the rightful owner.”

“ We buried the rightful owner upon the Isle aux Coudres.”

“ His granddaughter is Père Grison’s heiress.”

“ True, but she was burned to death when your English set the houses afire at Baie St. Paul, being too feeble to reach a place of safety.”

“ Who told you that ? ”

“ *La Bécasse* himself. We saw him but yesterday with his regiment at Beauport. He was sad at leaving his family at Lorette, where they were starving, like their neighbours; but Marcelline, he said was well-off, safe with the saints. Peace to her memory ! Now where is her gold ? ”

“ Did *La Bécasse* not tell you that also ? ”

“ He said you had been snapped up by

the British with the treasure upon you and that they had it now in their possession."

"Then why question me further about it?"

"What are you doing over here, if the gold be not hidden somewhere about? Come, little admiral, show us the spot, and we will give you a fair share."

"And if I will not?"

"We will take you to the Governor. He will make you speak."

Teddy hesitated. From the rising ground to which the men had brought him, he could see out to the great river, glittering and dancing in the afternoon sunlight. Far to the eastward were the white sails of part of the English fleet riding at anchor. It was maddening indeed to be thus held back within sight of safety. François would be loath to set off without him, but the tide was now racing out over the mud flats of the little river. If the pilot waited much longer he would be stuck on a sandbar. Why should he, Teddy Rudell, be left behind with these enemies of his? But could he,

as a man of honour, betray the whereabouts of the orphan and her gold? The Woodcock had led these very men to believe she was safe in heaven, knowing full well that there alone would she be secure from these covetous rascals. In such troublous times they could readily make their way into the General Hospital. Marcelline would not yet have had time to conceal her inheritance, or to give it into the care of the nuns. She was most likely sitting there in the sun with it still, fingering the gold pieces and planning what she would buy for the Woodcock's little ones. No, he could not betray her to these scoundrels. He set his mouth into a firm curve, and when he opened it he said :

“ Even if I really knew where the gold is now, I should not tell you. I have it not, nor have I hidden it—that is all I have to say.”

Pierre raised his hand to strike the boy, but the more politic Antoine held him back.

“ We must try what we can get for a ransom, Pierre. Saw you not the boat of

François the pilot down there by the boom? Go over and tell him to sail away to the British he is in league with and tell them we have here the son of one of their greatest admirals, and that here he shall stay until a large part of the gold whereof he has robbed us is returned. Three hundred *louis d'or*—no more, no less—shall we take for this boy.”

Teddy tried to wriggle after the stolid Pierre, stalking away on his errand; he tried to shout to François, hoping to be heard, but Antoine covered his mouth with his hand and held him firmly.

“What says he?” asked his captor when Pierre returned.

“He will give the admiral your message, and he will come back to this place at this time to-morrow with his answer.”

“To-morrow? We can't wait till then.”

“The tide goes out—he can't get back sooner.”

“Perdition on you for a fool! Why did you not tell him to come at high tide through the night? We might have waited till

then, but not till to-morrow afternoon! You might have set another place of meeting. This is dangerous in the daytime—in the track of all the troops going to and from the town. We may get caught ourselves and hauled up to our post on the Plains. You want not to go there more than myself, do you?”

Pierre agreed that he did not.

“Bring the prisoner along then and we can hide ourselves and him in that old mill yonder till the morning at least.”

Teddy found it an unpleasant change passing the night closed in with these two hostile Canadians instead of in the open air with the friendly Woodcock. The thought of the little hunchback and of the starving family for whom he was fighting alone kept up his courage. Such an unquiet night he had not spent since he was upon the Isle of Orleans with this same pair of scoundrels. What ought he to do? Would his strength hold out in the morning if the robbers insisted upon learning the actual abiding place of Marcelline's treasure? Surely at nightfall

the nuns would put it away in some secure place. He thought of the confused state of the hospital and how little trouble he himself had had to gain admission to any part of it. The wily Antoine would be able to persuade the helpless Marcelline or even the unsuspecting nuns that he had come as a messenger from the Woodcock to seek a large part, if not all of the gold, to relieve the starving Bonneau family. Well, what if he did? He, Teddy, had done his duty in turning the gold over to its rightful owner. What befell it now was no further concern of his.

In the morning his mind was made up—he would spend no more such nights in such company. So he said to the sneering Antoine, when questioned as to how he had slept:

“You will gain nothing by keeping me. I will tell you now where the gold is if you will let me go.”

“If you will take us to the very spot—yes!”

“But I cannot do that, since Marcelline

has it. She is in the General Hospital. The sisters of the community are the saints that have her in their holy keeping."

"That is a lie."

"How dare you doubt the word of a British officer?"

The man laughed in a fashion most irritating to the midshipman.

"If that story be true, why did you not tell it to us last night, and so have got off to your father with François, who brought you across from Point Lévis—so he told Pierre? You English are all in league to rob the honest poor, and the pilot is now one of you. I doubt if your father be anywhere about. 'Tis not likely that an admiral of a great fleet would let his son go roaming about the harbour in this manner."

"I have not seen him since I was captured on the Isle aux Coudres."

Antoine laughed again.

"The journey is not so far from the Baie St. Paul to Point Lévis that it should have taken you so long to get there."

Teddy began an account of his wanderings

on Goreham's sloop—but stopped. What was the use? He had made a mistake in telling of the whereabouts of the gold and its owner. These men might think it worth while to prove for themselves later on the truth or the untruth of his statement. Antoine, the sharper, might even go without Pierre, so as to secure for himself alone all that was to be had. The boy was not deceived by his saying:

“You think to send us off on a wild-goose chase to the hospital yonder, so that you may regain the money from the place where it is hidden, whilst our backs are turned. You would hide yourself somewhere till your pilot returns. We are simple habitants, my bold, but you cannot fool us.”

“What shall we do with him?” grumbled Pierre. “We have no food for an idle brat.”

“You remember what the Iroquois did to you twenty years ago, Pierre?”

“I am not likely to forget it.”

He held up his right hand and the shud-

dering Teddy perceived that the nail was missing from each of his fingers.

“Perhaps if we began with the thumb——” He fingered the small hand of the midshipman walking beside him.

“No,” said Antoine, “we must not mutilate him—not yet. We shall see first how much our Governor will give us for such a noted young gentleman. If he will not deal with us, we can come back here to see what François has for us in the afternoon.”

It was a new sensation for Teddy to wish himself not quite such a “noted young gentleman.” If he had been the son of the poor Woodcock, or of François sailing out freely upon the great river, there would have been no difficulty in escaping from the clutches of these two men. As it was, there was nothing for it but to trudge along beside them and keep up as good a heart as he could. They led him over a rough road that joined a well-beaten track leading up to and through the Palace Gate of the town.

The little admiral never forgot his first

sight of the devastation that had been wrought in poor old Quebec. Once again he realized that it was better to be at the spot whence the shot proceeded, than where it fell. To see the whole side torn out of a house, and its helpless, homely belongings laid bare to the prowling thieves that were everywhere at work; to see the dwellings of rich and poor alike, wherein children had played and young people had danced and sung, now naught but smouldering ruins; to see the great Cathedral itself, roofless, and the stray dogs nosing about among its sacred places—these were pitiable sights to a gallant little Briton. To Pierre and Antoine they were now an old story and they hastened on through the town, unheeding. Here and there a head would pop up from a cellar amid the ruins. Some of the householders had refused to leave the city, though commanded by their town major so to do.

“As well starve in the town as in the country,” they said. The booming of cannon, the shrieking of shells had become to them

so much a matter of course that their slumbers were no longer disturbed thereby. As Teddy and his captors passed on, there was a pause between shots from the English at Point Lévis, long enough to permit the voice of the little stream to be heard. Concealed beneath débris for the time, it continued its rollicking course down Fabrique Street, a cheerful prophet in its promise that one day all this grief and wreckage would be swept aside to let the river of peace once more emerge.

The Château St. Louis was in an exposed position near the edge of the cliff and directly facing the English batteries across the river, but Governor Vaudreuil still occupied it. Being himself a native-born Canadian, his ear was ever open to the complaints of the humblest of his compatriots. The trio was admitted immediately to his presence. Antoine, as usual, acted as spokesman, but when Teddy heard him claim the full credit for having captured his companions and himself upon the Isle aux Coudres, he could not refrain from breaking in :

“ They never touched me, monsieur, these two. It was Dominique Bonneau, *dit la Bécasse*, who shot his own horse under me so cleverly that I received not a scratch. These men are thieves and liars who have striven to keep Père Grison’s gold away from his poor little hunchbacked granddaughter.”

“ This lad is no Englishman—begone with you ! ” said the Governor.

“ Indeed, your Excellency, he has learned to speak French from *La Bécasse*,” said Antoine.

“ Then he must have been a long time with him. What does he now here with you ? What are you doing here yourselves ? ”

“ We met him by chance as we were crossing the bridge of boats on our way to take post, as ordered, with Captain de Vergor at Anse des Mères on the Plains. We stopped the boy to ask what he and the Woodcock had done with the treasure of which they had robbed us——”

“ ’Twas not their treasure,” cried Teddy again. “ I will tell everything to your

Excellency, if you will but send these villains away and let me talk to you alone. I will tell you where the gold now is."

"We said that he knew," growled Pierre. "We need not to trouble your Excellency more. Let us depart with our prisoner."

"Wait a minute——" began the Governor. "Who is this next?"

The door opened to admit an officer of the line, his white coat and accoutrements spotless and shining as if so distressful a thing as warfare were many leagues removed from him. Teddy's heart leaped in glad relief as he recognized the Chevalier de Lévis.

“ **A**H, Chevalier, how came you here ? ”
said the Governor.

“ Just took a ride down from Montreal to inquire for your Excellency’s sore throat. What goes on here ? ”

“ It is of no consequence. I shall dismiss it immediately,” said M. de Vaudreuil in some nervousness. “ I wish immediately to learn the meaning of this mysterious journey away from your post at such a time.”

“ Affair of no consequence ? That cannot be when I see concerned in it an officer of the fleet of his Britannic Majesty.”

“ You know this boy to be English then ? ”

“ Of a surety. It was he who tried to prevent my setting the Indians upon his countrymen down there at Montmorenci.

You may have observed that his speech is not that of the habitant."

"Our habitants speak the purest of Norman French, M. de Lévis."

"Undoubtedly, and this young gentleman could never gain that in an English school. He had a strong foreign accent when I heard him speak. What have you to say for yourself now, my ch—my noble adversary? Where is your guardian—your henchman, pardon me—the strapping Canadian who brought us news of the Indian ambush?"

"He is with his regiment at Beauport," Teddy replied. "Were I but there with him again I could bide content until my father takes the town."

De Lévis smiled.

"Your father has been a long time about it, my amiable foe. In July you told us he would be within these walls immediately. It is now September and he is no nearer than before."

"Nevertheless, your capital will be in the hands of the English before the summer is over."

“Summer is a short season in Canada, Master Midshipman. Your father’s fleet will be ice-bound, if he tarry here much longer.”

“My father will never give up the siege, never, so long as I am in the town.”

“It might be better for us then to send you back to him straightway, with our compliments, and request him to go about his business.”

“I doubt if I should consent to be restored on such terms. The honour of the English navy is of more importance than the life of the humblest of her officers.”

“Not her humblest, that I swear,” said the Chevalier, returning the boy’s obeisance with one of like degree, as to an equal.

Meanwhile the two Canadians, standing apart, failed to see how all this bowing and scraping was going to further their recovery of the coveted gold. The Governor too was waxing impatient, wishing to get M. de Lévis alone and to hear his business in the town, which must be urgent indeed. Confound these trifling officers from France!

They never did regard the situation of Canada as seriously as he, a native. M. de Vaudreuil addressed the boy himself :

“ Where is this treasure that these habitants ask about ? ”

“ I have already told them, monsieur, that it is in the keeping of the rightful owner _____ ”

“ Who is dead,” interrupted Pierre, but the boy continued :

“ Who she is and where she is I will tell your Excellency alone—not before these scoundrels who would spare no pains to rob her of her inheritance.”

“ He has told us one lie,” protested Antoine, “ doubtless he has another ready for your Excellency’s ears.”

De Lévis came forward.

“ Permit me to withdraw, as well as these worthy habitants, M. de Vaudreuil, whilst you give this young midshipman a private audience. The errand I have come upon is of infinitely less moment. It can wait. My faith ! The young cock crows like a whole barn yard. I should love to see his

opponents eat snakes. I can retire with my aide-de-camp into the next room—that is to say if you deem it perfectly safe for the Governor-General of Canada to be left alone with a British officer.”

“Nonsense!” exclaimed the Governor, brusquely. He was not quite sure that the Chevalier was not making fun of himself as well as of the stripling. “Go out into the ante-room, my men, until this child has delivered his wonderful secret into the ears of General de Lévis and myself.”

Antoine and Pierre sullenly withdrew. Teddy poured forth his tale to one sympathetic listener at least, though that one smiled at his earnestness. The Governor took him more seriously.

“The Ursulines now at the General Hospital have enough upon their hands,” said he, “without having such an amount of gold to guard. It must be brought hither at once.”

Teddy shot a supplicating glance at de Lévis which did not miscarry. The Chevalier remarked :

“Methinks your Excellency also cannot afford to be burdened with it, nor to run the risk of the messenger being robbed who should bring it here. The good sisters must have some sort of a strong-box for their own valuables, underground—safer than this target for the English, which the city is now.”

“They may know nothing about it. The orphan child may have thought she could hide the scarf herself somewhere.”

“Suppose your Excellency sends a message to the nuns to have a watchful eye upon the heiress and her inheritance. That were the best plan, to my thinking, though M. Bigot might not agree.”

Fear of being classed with Bigot as a robber of the poor, perhaps had something to do with M. de Vaudreuil's acceptance of the proposition.

“But those men without there? This boy tells us he has foolishly put them upon the hospital scent.”

“Send them back to the ranks where they belong.”

“They say they belong with Vergor on the heights. I shall see that they go there. Anse des Mères is far enough removed from the General Hospital, though I hate to think of them as thieves.”

“All of the Canadians, as your Excellency well knows, are not so grasping as these two have shown themselves to be. The gold will be perfectly safe with the Ursulines, once they are out of the way. As for the boy, he can stay here with you.”

“Perhaps,” said de Vaudreuil with some reluctance.

Teddy had drawn close to the side of the Chevalier and was looking up into his face with an expression so trusting that the French general laid his hand affectionately on the boy's shoulder as he asked:

“How would you like to come away out of this hurly-burly—back to Montreal with me? I am going to stay but an hour or two, for I must try to be at my post again before many of my followers are aware that I have left it. My aide, yonder, could take you up behind him on his horse.”

“ I might ride in front, sir, but behind—that is a position for women only.”

“ Not at all, *M. l'amiral le jeune*. The man who owns the horse merely rides in front to control him, unless in the case of a child over whose head he can see——”

“ Or who needs to be held on,” added Teddy with a merry little laugh.

“ Exactly. With so fine a horseman behind him, as I doubt not that you are, my aide will be grateful if you will look over his shoulder occasionally and give him a few directions.”

Teddy laughed again, but his young mind was working freely at last. “ I think I shall not go to Montreal with you, *M. de Lévis*. My ship, the *Diana*, is not likely to go so far up the river.”

“ I should think not ! ” exclaimed the Chevalier and the Governor in a breath.

“ Therefore I am nearer my father if I stay here.”

“ Bien ! As it pleases you ! ”

The Governor was vexed at this further interchange of pleasantries.

“It would appear more fitting to keep the young urchin under lock and key in the citadel, Chevalier.”

“Pouf! So small a—your pardon once more, *M. l’amiral le jeune!* His Excellency seems not to be aware that the honour of an officer of His Majesty’s fleet is above suspicion. Let him go about on parole, my good friend.”

De Vaudreuil lowered his voice. “You may deem that wise, but I do not. The smallest enemy may be a spy. This whippersnapper, who has such a dangerous knowledge of French, could crawl through a very small hole and make off to the enemy with tidings of all our concerns. ’Twould be news of moment to them that you are here, M. de Lévis, instead of in Montreal, where you are supposed to be.”

“And where you wish I were at the present moment. Oh La! La!”

“Not at all; but I think you are too little suspicious about this midget. How do we know that the pilot he speaks about is not even now in the harbour waiting to carry

him back to the fleet of the English, so soon as we let him go free ? ”

“ I am no mean judge of character, M. de Vaudreuil, as you have reason to know, and I myself will be responsible for this youth’s honesty. If he pledges himself not to try to make his escape, he will not do so; of that I am assured. With the handsome browning he has got to his face, it were a sad pity to cage him in a damp, unwholesome dungeon. See here, sirrah, if you are allowed to go about freely, will you promise not to prowl around the water’s edge trying to communicate with your friends ? ”

“ I will stay in town, or on the highlands, sir, till my friends come to me.”

“ Good ! Stay till then ! But we should not like to keep you here till your little nose is frost-bitten. When your fleet begins to set sail down the river, Governor Vaudreuil will see to it that you get off by the last boat.”

“ Thank you, sir. Perhaps it will not be necessary.”

“ Perhaps not ; but in any event we must

make the best defence possible and trust that fortune will continue to smile upon the arms of France, as she has hitherto done. Are you satisfied, M. de Vaudreuil? ”

The Governor appeared not to be so, entirely.

“ The lad must agree that even should it be in his power to do so, he will in no wise help the enemy, but will consider himself a Canadian until such time as we can set him free, the result of this contest being decided.”

“ How does that sound to an officer of his Britannic Majesty? ”

“ It sounds well, M. de Lévis. I have been living with the Canadians this whole summer. They have treated me as one of themselves, have shared their food with me, little though they had, and they have never cast it into my face that I was one of their dreaded enemies. I shall be a Canadian till it be determined whether France or England is to be their future master.”

“ Well spoken my boy! ” exclaimed the Governor heartily. “ I also have a feeling

for my down-trodden countrymen. With due apologies to M. de Lévis, who is an exception, and a credit to the whole army, I should gladly see the last French soldier, as well as the last English one, safely back in Europe."

"Tut! Tut!" laughed de Lévis. "Your Excellency could not get along without us—but *bon jour, M. l'amiral le jeune*. If I am a credit to my nation, you are likewise a credit to yours. I trust you may be able to convince M. de Vaudreuil that the English come only as friends in disguise."

"I think we might find a corner in the Château secure from their fire to house so small a boy," continued the Governor cordially. "My valet will get you some better clothes—but a good meal first, eh?"

Teddy was hungry as a hunter, and he preferred to be dressed as one, though His Excellency's man-servant brought out more than one costume, small enough for him to try on. There had been fancy dress balls and all sorts of gaiety in the capital before the war came too close, and some

of the ladies, no taller than Teddy himself, had chosen to dress as pages. But Teddy wanted none of their finery. Nor would he condescend to accept the smart little uniform of a French drummer boy. To be found by his friends wearing a white coat would disgrace him for ever in their eyes—and his own. No, the homespun of the habitant was good enough for him, and at last garments to fit were found for him.

“If I am to be a Canadian,” he said, “for the time being—I shall dress like one. Clothes that are clean and whole more than content me.”

After the hot days in the Beauport trenches, the drenching thunder storms, the crowded ship, it seemed almost too luxurious to be sleeping in a room, however small, on a bed, however hard. But in a short time Teddy became restless at staying in the town—just to be fired at, as it seemed to him. His actual fear of being hit by a British bomb had dwindled, but he hated the sight of the misery all about him. So the first fine day he took advantage of his

parole to wander out of the St. Louis Gate, and on and on as far as the Plains of Abraham.

The air of that high upland intoxicated his young spirit. Here were no miserable hovels nor ruined houses, but an undulating plateau, dotted with clumps of trees. The great river to the left, the small river to the right were both below the cliffs, out of sight, but there was a mountain frame on the horizon, comparatively near to the northward, far distant on the south. Along the Beauport shore, as far as the gorge of Montmorenci, stretched the French encampment, but apart from the view of that, there was no sight to suggest warfare, nor any sound except the occasional *BOOM!* of a cannon from one of the ships in the river, or the bursting of a shell from Point Lévis upon the doomed city.

The little admiral made friends with the men at the first two outposts along the edge of the bluff next the St. Lawrence, and visited them every day, but he never ventured so far as the third post, Anse des

Mères, because he knew that there were stationed his enemies, Pierre and Antoine. He loved to watch for an occasional English war-ship sailing up or down with the tide, always keeping out of reach of the guns of the citadel, merely through bravado the cliff guards said, to give the soldiers on the strand far below something to do, following their movements along the bank of the St. Lawrence, lest their men should at any place attempt a landing.

UPON a certain afternoon that second week of September, the little admiral pushed his way out to a projecting spur of the cliff, whereon there were no trees to hide his view of the great river. He lay with his hands under his chin, idly watching the tide running up stream, and wondering what was going to happen. He had acquired such a taste for exciting adventure this past summer, that even a week of quiet sleeping and eating in town, and of strolling about the Plains by day had begun to pall upon him.

He felt himself to be far removed from the scene of action. The British would not raise the siege without making a final assault upon the lines of the French. This he had gathered from the remarks of the Governor and his aides, who regarded him now as a

person of no importance. They did not hesitate about discussing their fears and their projects before him—no more than if he had been really the little habitant that he seemed. If he had but his liberty he might show them their mistake. He could point out to General Wolfe the exact place upon the Beauport shore where an attack had best be made, for there the entrenchment was weakest. The English had gained wisdom, and would not again attempt the impossible, as they had done in July ; but none of their General's advisers, he felt sure, had had his opportunities for determining where success was most likely to be attained.

Yet here he was, quite removed both from doing anything, and from seeing what was done. The grand climax, the testing battle, must be fought between Wolfe and Montcalm over there in the valley of the St. Charles, where he could not so much as catch a glimpse of it. On the heights, he would be able to hear cannonading, to see the smoke of battle rising over the edge of the bluff yonder, nothing more. This little admiral had been

too close to big events to enjoy his entire removal from the biggest of all, which was yet to occur.

Suddenly he sat up and rubbed his eyes. That frigate below there in the river, which had sailed down stream till almost within gunshot of the Quebec batteries and had now put about, was the *Diana*! There could be no doubt about it. Did he not know every view of her hull and rigging? Teddy sprang to his feet, his heart full to bursting, his throat choked with sobs. Cursed be the promise he had made not to leave the heights! Why, he could easily scramble over the edge of this cliff—nothing at all to those he had gone up and down at Les Eboulements—let himself down by the bushes and gain the strand. The river was so narrow at this part, he was sure he could make his friends hear him if he shouted from the shore. In one of those coves down there it would not be hard to find a boatman as “neutral” as François had become, to take him out to his own father. Alack-a-day! He had been brought up to keep his plighted word.

The frigate was moving past him now, up stream, her full sails bellied by the north-east wind. Teddy raced along the edge of the high, rough edge of the cliff to keep her company, as far as he dared. He took out the big white pocket-handkerchief given him by the Governor, to wave at the sailors—then remembered his promise and used it to wipe his eyes instead. So he kept stumbling on and on, up hill and down, looking twice at the ship for once he looked at his feet to see where he was going. Thus unheeding, he walked as far as Anse des Mères, straight into the outpost he had meant to avoid, and was challenged by its sentry, who was Antoine!

The pock-marked Canadian pretended that he had never seen the boy before. He brought him up to Captain de Vergor simply as an English spy.

“Too small to hurt us,” remarked the captain. “We have no place to keep him. Let him go!”

But Antoine had no intention of doing anything of the kind. He urged the case upon his commander:

“ I saw him myself signalling to that frigate which has just passed up. If we let him go, he will make his way to it, from some place or another. They may have a boat below now, waiting for him.”

“ Well, what if they have ? They will not get much picking off his bones.”

“ He could tell the English that you have let most of your men go home to gather in their harvest ; that there are far too few of us here to hold this post against them.”

“ Bah ! The English will not dream of attacking us on this side. But if you think the small boy so dangerous, Antoine, keep hold of him yourself—share your rations with him—your blanket—how will you like that ? ”

“ My mate, Pierre, and I can take turns keeping guard over him. To-morrow some of the others will be back and it will be our time to go home to look after our crops. On our way we can take the boy to General Montcalm, who will decide what is to be done with him.”

“ As you will,” rejoined de Vergor. “ I

think you are over-suspicious—such a harmless-looking infant.”

Antoine saluted and came away, still keeping tight hold of Teddy. The boy was in despair. He knew right well that Antoine recognized him, in spite of the improvement in his dress, and that there was little chance of his being taken anywhere near the Marquis de Montcalm. After their experience with the Chevalier, Pierre and Antoine would take good care that no more honourable French gentlemen interfered with him. He had not been allowed to come near enough even to de Vergor to get in a word in his own defence. The game of these villains would now be to see what amount of ransom was to be had for him from the English. Pierre joined Antoine at nightfall, and to prevent the boy's escape under the shadow of the darkness, they tied his hands and feet together before they stretched themselves out to slumber till their watch was on.

There were hardly any men left at this Anse des Mères outpost, and of those few there was not one whom Teddy had ever seen

before or could appeal to as a friend. Now he indeed felt himself a stranger in a strange land, bound and helpless, as he had never been before. This was the worst fortune the war had yet brought him. He asked himself if he were indeed Midshipman Rudell, who up to the time of his setting out to sea, six months before, had never known the meaning of hardship in any form. As for war and its ravages they had been far removed from his safe and sheltered life. He had become a chip on a great ocean of events, drifting—he knew not whither. He tried to curl up like a hedgehog among some dried leaves, for the night was cold, but his wrists and his ankles were galled with their cords, and the best he could do was to roll as far as he safely could over the edge of the bluff and gain shelter from the wind in a slight hollow at the foot of a clump of bushes. He had but fitful snatches of sleep.

Suddenly he woke from his dreaming, or musing—he could not decide which it had been. Surely there were footsteps on the strand below. Could it be the Canadians

returning to their post? Of course not. That was not the way they would come. Some of the Frenchmen must be below who had been detailed to watch the movements of the British fleet, up and down the river. But why were they so quiet? Judging by the footfalls, there must be a considerable number of soldiers down there and yet there was not the slightest murmur of voices——Hark! That was assuredly an officer giving an order in an undertone. How very considerate they were about not disturbing the slender guard at the top of the hill. They were surely not thinking of climbing it in the darkness. Yes, they were!

Teddy could hear the men beginning the ascent, using more and more caution as they drew near the top. He wriggled down to a bush still nearer the precipice, and was in imminent danger of falling over it. But he must strain his eyes to discover, if possible, what was going on upon the beach far below. If those were white-coats down there, surely the mass of them ought to be distinguishable even in the absence of daylight. What about

those who were nearly up to the top by this time? What was their errand? The boy's question was answered by the glimmer that he caught of strange garments fluttering about the legs of some——

“The Highlanders! *Mon Dieu!* It is the British at last!”

Unconsciously, he spoke in French. His first sympathy rushed in a flood to that side. Who among them had ever dreamt of the English coming this way? Certainly not Captain Vergor, or he would not have let so many of his men go off on leave. Certainly not General Lévis, who had jokingly bidden him wait on the heights till they came. If the Chevalier were here now he would beat back the invaders again, as he had done at Montmorenci. But he was away off in Montreal, watching for the expected invasion by way of Lake Champlain. It did seem too bad, after their long days and nights of standing guard throughout this terrible summer, for the French to be caught napping like this. Saint Joseph must have forgotten his children when he allowed their foes to

land upon the very night when there was almost no one to oppose them. So argued the impatient boy in the bushes, writhing to be free from his bonds that he might take his stand with his own people, who had come to free him. Let the Canadians take care of themselves; he need be one of them no longer, however sorry he might feel for their lost cause.

An exultant thrill was running through his veins. He was a Briton, and the boldness of the deed thrilled him. How many men were coming up the side of the cliff he could not estimate. The first of them made a dash for the Captain's tent. There was a quick scuffle, a shot or two, the British held the post! Such a ringing cheer as never came from French lungs informed those below that the coast had been cleared at the top. Two dark bodies lunged past the boy where he lay—Pierre and Antoine—bent upon making their escape over the edge of the bluff, but—they met a stalwart Highlandman coming up—almost ran into him in the darkness. His claymore was ready in his hand. They

had thrown away their guns in their haste.

“ I pinked those twa prettily,” Teddy heard him say, and he recognized the voice.

“ Hector ! ” he shouted. “ Hector Macfarlane. Come and help me out of this ! ”

“ It’s here ye are, ye thief o’ the world. Juist as I expected. Ye’ll get nae help frae me. What for did ye run off wi’ Mary’s money ? ”

“ I can explain if you will untie me, Hector.”

“ I’ll dae naething o’ the sort. Them what’s tied ye kent what they was about.”

So he ran off to join the rest of Fraser’s Highlanders, forming into ranks for the march onwards, and left Teddy bound. To do Hector justice, it was his intention to come back and look for the boy after the battle was over, which he knew to be impending ; but in the meantime the lad was safer where he was.

“ It’ll learn him a lesson,” said Hector to himself—“ keepin’ me from gettin’ promotion wi’ his desertion.”

The soldiers were now hastening upwards with less caution. The sound of their English

voices, cursing the darkness and the rocks that rolled down upon them, through being loosened by ascending comrades in front, was music to one small pair of ears accustomed to French so long, but the boy could not make himself heard though he shouted and called till he was hoarse. The men seemed to swerve away from the spot where he lay as they got higher up the hillside, following, no doubt, the bed of the little stream he had noticed. How could he get nearer to them? The slight move in that direction which he made, sufficed to show him that he would fall clear to the strand far below, if he were not careful. The soldiers had but a single end in view—to follow one another as quickly as possible, to form into companies at the top of the hill and then make a quick march towards the city. Well, they had come to stay, that was evident, and sooner or later he would be found.

It was about midnight when the first of the British arrived. The dawn was breaking when the last of them reached the cliff top. Teddy could hardly believe his ears when he

heard the familiar "Heave Ho!" of sailors, the creaking of wheels, and saw, dimly through the brightening dusk, a band of blue-jackets hauling a small cannon up the bank. Here were his own kind at last! He would crack his lungs, but he *would* make himself known. Alas! His voice by this time was little more than a croak. Not even the red-haired young midshipman running alongside the gun could catch a whisper of it.

"Harry! Harry Webb!" groaned Teddy. It was a consolation at least to know that his chum was not dead. Here he was—able to take part in the great events about to happen, while he himself had to lie still like a dead dog. Should the English be beaten, driven back to their ships in the St. Lawrence, they would trample over him—but no, no they could not be beaten! They would scale the walls of Quebec. They would take possession of the Château, where he had eaten and slept—but—but he would not be there to beg clemency for his good friends. Why had Hector left him there? So cruel of him!

"Perhaps I deserved it," said the small

boy to himself. He had plenty of time for reflection. "He would get into trouble when Captain Goreham came back and found me and the gold both gone. But the captain must have told him I was really the son of Admiral Rudell—if he really did ask about me, as he said he would. Perhaps he forgot about me. They seem all to have forgotten me!"

The little admiral lay there on the hillside and saw nothing whatever of what was going forward nearer the town. About ten o'clock he heard a great deal of firing—that was all. He was stiff with cold from having lain in that cramped position all night. The sun was high in the heavens before he heard steps coming near him. Was it Pierre or Antoine venturing back to look for him? Had they not both been killed by that onslaught from Hector, as he fancied? Was it the first of the retreating English? No, it was only an old woman gathering firewood. He had got back his voice now and he called to her.

"Heaven help us!" she exclaimed.
"What are you doing there?"

“Some bad men tied me up and left me,” he said. “Please cut these cords.”

She freed him with a few strokes of the hatchet she carried, and the grateful boy stretched his arms and legs in rapture at their recovery.

“You had best come with me into the town,” said his deliverer. “There is fighting on the Plains—no place for women or children.”

Teddy began his usual speech about not being a child, but indeed he felt very young and helpless at that moment. If he could get back into the Château long enough to eat a belated breakfast he would be content. There would be time enough afterwards to seek out Harry Webb and the rest of them.

“I will go with you, madame, if you will permit me to carry your load.”

The kind-faced old peasant stared at him in astonishment.

“None of your sort is fit to bear burdens. My old back is used to it.”

“I am stronger than you. Give me hold!”
He grasped one end of the bundle of fire-

wood so resolutely that the old woman said to herself :

“ Perhaps he is only a habitant, though he speaks so fine.”

She guided him for a mile or more along the cliff edge, sheltered by its brow, until past the region where white-coats and red-coats were engaged in deadly conflict. When they reached the St. Louis Gate of the city, wounded men, supported by comrades, were already straggling back through it—unwounded men were rushing in too. Were the French beaten back into the town? Could it be possible that the battle was already over?

IN spite of the crowding and the jostling, Teddy was determined to get once more within the gates of Quebec, and a diversion occurred in his favour. The way was cleared to let in an officer on horseback, with many glittering orders on his breast. He appeared to be sorely wounded, the pallor of his face akin to the whiteness of his coat, and of the lace cuffs which fell over his hands. He was holding the reins loosely, but a grenadier at either side supported him upon his horse. A small man, he appeared to Teddy, with hawk-like features and brown eyes dulled with pain, but a brave spirit for all that as one could judge from the response he made to the weeping women who thronged the entrance to the gate :

“ *Hélas !* Our good General ! The Marquis is slain ! ”

Montcalm made a mighty effort to straighten himself in the saddle as he said :

“ Trouble not yourselves for me, my good friends. It is nothing ! ”

He rode onwards amid the distressful cries of the populace who followed after him, and Teddy was swept along with them. They stood outside the little house into which the Marquis had been carried and anew the lamentations broke forth when the doctor's verdict was made known—he could not live. The boy felt a sympathetic throb of grief tugging at his heart-strings, though he kept saying to himself :

“ I am glad it is not General de Lévis.”

The Governor, everybody in the Château, was in a state of consternation over the news of battle that came in from different quarters. The boy found food for himself and ate mechanically. Nobody seemed to be thinking any more about him—only of their own affairs and of what would happen should the Governor surrender the town to the dreaded victors.

Teddy felt ashamed—as if he had to keep out of sight of these good friends of his, who

must fancy that he was rejoicing over their defeat. But he was not ! He was glad now that he had not been an eye-witness to the battle. He felt more sorrow over the mortally wounded Montcalm, whom he had seen, than over the fate of Wolfe, whom he had not. For it was whispered about that the English general too had lost his life on the Plains. Oh, it was all wrong—*all wrong*—this fighting, no matter which side you were on. There was always right—there were always good people on both sides. Surely there must be some other way of settling disputes than this marching out of innocent men to shoot and slash one another, rousing bad passions, ruining so many happy homes, making widows and orphans and cruelly crippled folk.

As Teddy tossed that night on a wakeful pillow, he thought of the Woodcock and his twelve, of François and the Chevalier de Lévis ; then of his father and friends on the *Diana*. Which side did he wish to win ? Nobody in Quebec thought that the skirmish on the Plains that 13th of September had really settled the whole affair. The little

admiral wandered about the Château next day, but could not see the Governor. The few attendants who were left knew nothing about him.

“M. de Vaudreuil has no doubt passed the night at the death-bed of General Montcalm,” said Teddy to himself. “It is more polite for me to wait here till he returns.”

But he never came back! The lonesome little boy rambled next about the town. He would not go without the gate, because he hated the thought of seeing the dead and the mutilated bodies that must be there. It was bad enough to see and to hear those of the wounded that all day were being carried in by their comrades. But at last another sound than groaning struck upon his ear.

A military band was coming up Fabrique Street to Place d’Armes—not a large company followed the musicians—but British—there was no mistaking it! He knew all the French airs, and this band was playing “A Life on the Ocean Wave.”

Hurrah! Hurrah! The men were from

the *Diana*. He threw up his cap to welcome them! He called to each sailor by name as they passed! He broke through the ranks to slap on the back Midshipman Hastings on the far side! He cast himself bodily upon the stately gentleman at the very end—in the full-dress uniform of an admiral of the fleet—

“Father! Oh *father!*!”

That evening he was back on board the *Diana*, in the admiral’s cabin, telling his story, and not ashamed to sit upon his father’s knee as he told it! Admiral Rudell was very proud of the way his little son had borne the hard fortune of war, but he merely said:

“You have grown two inches, Ted.”

“Maybe, father, but I want not to be either soldier or sailor. I shall go to war no more.”

By the spring-time he had changed his mind—at least about going to sea again. His adventures had made him a hero among his friends and acquaintances in England.

Why should he not set out in search of more? The *Diana* was going to Quebec, this time on an errand of mercy. She was to be laden with stores for the distressed garrison there, if so be it had been able to hold out through the terrible winter in a ruined town, surrounded by a hostile country. The climate of Canada must have worked great havoc among troops not equipped to withstand it. They would indeed bless the ships that brought them food and clothing. Midshipman Rudell was anxious to hear of the welfare of the Woodcock and his family, of François, the pilot, of Hector Macfarlane and that gallant gentleman, the Chevalier de Lévis. No, the boys should not sail without him.

It was upon a beautiful May day that the *Diana* anchored once more in the harbour of Quebec. This time she had her full complement of midshipmen. Master Rudell waited impatiently the formal leave for going ashore. He would not again venture to land without it. George Hastings, Harry Webb and he got their liberty at last and were

landed in the Lower Town of Quebec. The two older boys did but remark upon the devastation wrought by English guns. Little attempt had yet been made at rebuilding. The younger boy's eyes were alert for the sight of a friend. He saw one at last, as the three of them were toiling up Mountain Hill in the rolling gait, which betrayed to all whom it might concern that they were just off the water. As the deliverers of the town from famine, they were hailed with acclamations on every side. One old man was particularly grateful.

“François! Oh, François!”

The pilot turned about from the congratulations he was giving to a couple of sailors from the *Lowestoffe*. Three spruce young middies were facing him, each with hand at his hat in salute.

“My little admiral!”

The pilot clasped Teddy in his arms, much to the boy's embarrassment. Those sailors might be looking and laughing. He disengaged himself as soon as he could do so without hurting the old man's feelings.

“What has been happening here? We all want to know.”

“Let us sit down to it—my legs are old.”

He led the boys to a heap of stones, part of the ruins of the Bishop's Palace, and there they sat facing the gleaming river and the English ships anchored upon it, with their backs turned upon the desolation of the town.

“Your vessels have raised the siege,” said François. The *Lowestoffe* was the first to arrive. She brought the first news we had had from Europe since the autumn.”

“What siege?”

“The siege of Quebec, my children. Think you that M. de Lévis has sat with folded hands by his fireside all winter? He was not the man to consider New France lost to Old France in one battle.”

“What has he been about?”

“Last month he brought down his troops from Montreal. We heard of their coming through a poor devil of a deserter who got adrift upon a floating block of ice when the river broke up. The English sailors drew him ashore and he, being more dead than

alive, told them all he knew of the plans of General Lévis for the recapture of Quebec. His army had been kept well supplied with provisions, while General Murray, the commander here, could not get enough food for his garrison at any price. A whole detachment had to be sent without the walls whenever there was firewood to be cut, as small parties were sure to be captured. The habitants, little admiral, are not yet alive to the benefits to be brought about by a change of rulers."

"But the Chevalier de Lévis—tell me of him."

"His first scheme was to scale the walls of the city while the snow still lay deep around them, but that was abandoned, though many of his friends in Quebec looked for him daily. He accepted an invitation to eat his Christmas dinner in their midst! He was kept thoroughly posted upon the number of sick in the English garrison, the scarcity of provisions, the number of deaths. When he arrived at last to lay siege to the city, your General Murray sallied forth to meet him on the Plains,

even as Montcalm met Wolfe—with a like result.”

“ They were both killed ! ”

“ No ! No ! They are both alive, bless you ! What I mean is that the army which marched out of the town was defeated.”

“ Not the British ? ”

“ The British—yes—little admiral. It happened a fortnight ago. The battle was far bloodier than that of September 13th—more men fighting on both sides. Our Canadians fought nobly, as before——”

“ I doubt it not—but the Chevalier—where is he now ? ”

“ Retired to Deschambault, up the river. When the English ships, instead of the longed-for French, made their appearance, he knew that the game was up. So he raised the siege. Your nation, little admiral, is a better upholder than ours of its absent servants.”

“ Its absent servants may be better worth upholding.”

“ That is true indeed of those that are now in this city. General Murray has had a more difficult task set before him than was placed

before General Wolfe. The one makes a grand *coup* ; the other holds fast the fruits of victory. He has had only a handful of men and has been surrounded with enemies. This city has been like a camp. We are under martial law—each morning waked by trumpet, and all lights must be out by ten.”

“ Many times this last winter I have wondered how the roofless houses of Quebec were sheltering the soldiers and the citizens through the deep snows and the cold I have heard about.”

“ Ah, my little admiral, you should have seen the frost-bitten knees of the savages of Scotland until the good sisters made long stockings for them.”

“ What sisters ? ”

“ The Ursulines, certainly. Fraser’s Highlanders have been quartered in their convent. It was one of the few buildings left with a roof on it, and even it got a shell or two. You may have heard that they buried M. de Montcalm in the hole made by the bursting of one in the chapel of the Ursulines.”

“No, I had not heard of that. General Wolfe lies in Westminster Abbey.”

“The fortune of war!” said the old pilot, with a shrug of his shoulder. “I doubt not the sleeping is as good in the one place as the other.”

“If the 78th is in the convent of the Ursulines, I must go there to see Hector Macfarlane, and explain to him why I left him with you that day at Point Lévis and took the gold along with me. Perhaps he will forgive me when he hears the whole story.”

“*Bon jour* my little admiral. I shall take these other two young gentlemen to see what is left of our city.”

Teddy pursued his way to the Upper Town alone. In the courtyard of the Convent he met another friend.

“You here, *La Bécasse*! This is rare good fortune!”

The Woodcock had been looking glum enough; but his face fairly beamed at the sight of his young friend. He seized Teddy in his arms, kissed him upon either cheek and then held him back from him as he exclaimed,

“How you have grown! How fine your dress is—and your hair—how long again! *Ma foi!* I wish Hortense could see thee!”

“Can she not? Is she not in Quebec?”

“No, indeed. Think you we remained an hour longer than was needful away from the Coudres? The twelve are all back there in our little cabin—all but Marie.”

“And Marie? Is she with the Ursulines?”

“Ah, she were safe with the good sisters, but alas, she is bent on marriage with a heretic!”

“Heretic? What heretic? Where did she see one?”

“Hector Macfarlane, your friend, my little admiral.”

“Hector? Why he’s no heretic, no more than yourself, M. Bonneau.”

“The Savages of Scotland not heretics! What are they then?”

Teddy was always proud to impart information.

“That Scottish regiment is Catholic, nearly to a man. It is we, the English, who are Protestant.”

He threw out his young chest with an air, but *La Bécasse* beamed.

“Be what you will so that none of you think to wed my Marie. So Hector is of our faith! The nuns told me not that, though they said he had been one of their helpers during the bitter winter that is past.”

“Helpers? How?”

“The Sisters have kept to the upper story and the attic of their convent. The Scottish savages occupied the lower floor. They cut wood, drew water and shovelled snow for the nuns—but if he is no heretic I need wait no longer for this Hector Macfarlane to warn him away from my door.”

“Of course not,” said Teddy with his grand air. “He is a friend of mine. But for his help I could never have got, nor kept hold of the gold of Marcelline. Ah! Here he comes!”

Teddy was caught up into the arms of the tall red-headed Highlander in an embrace that threatened to crack his ribs, and much disturbed his dignity. But it was not every day one was restored to such good friends, and

nobody from the ship was about to see how they treated him.

Hector Macfarlane at the Peace was granted for his services a portion of the very land he coveted, down near Malbaie. There the Little Admiral visited him and Marie on his later voyages, but more often he spent his shore leave across the way with the Woodcock upon the Isle aux Coudres. The rest of the twelve grew up and scattered, some of them to the far west, but to this day there are Macfarlanes, descendants of Hector and Marie, at Malbaie, now called Murray Bay, who cannot speak a word of English. Their mother's tongue has won.

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